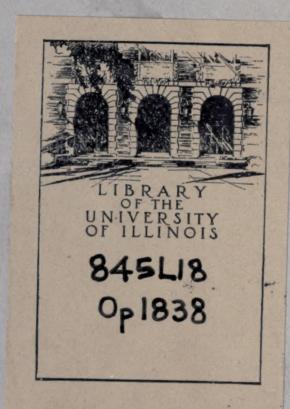


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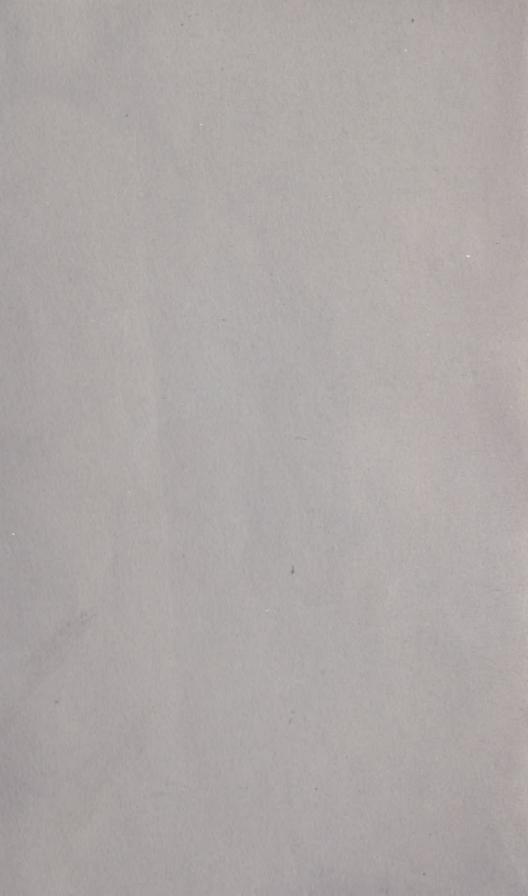


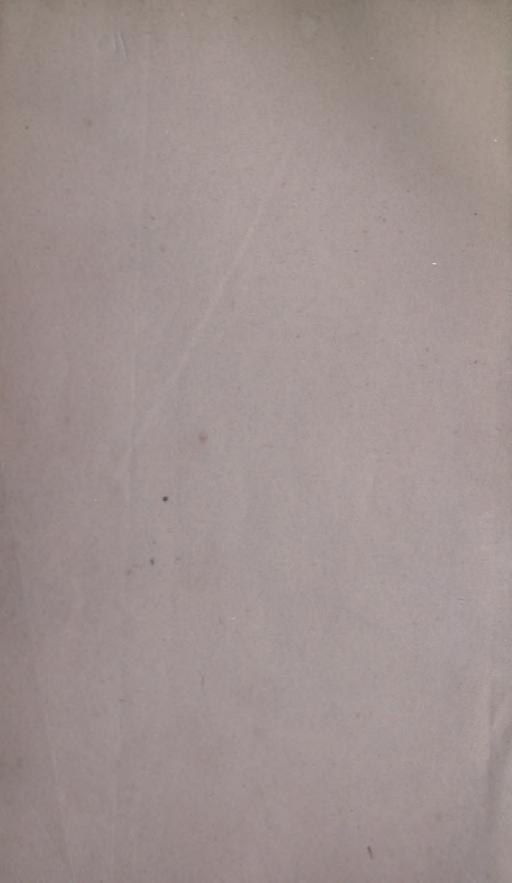
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DUN CROYANT.

E DE LA MENNAIS

RESTABLLES

Service of Court.

1836



PAROLES

D'UN CROYANT,

PAR

F. DE LA MENNAIS.



BRUXELLES.

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1838

PAROLES

D'UN CROYANT,

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PRÉFACE

DE 4835.

AU PEUPLE.

Ce livre a été fait principalement pour vous; c'est à vous que je l'offre. Puisse-t-il, au milieu de tant de maux qui sont votre partage, de tant de douleurs qui vous affaissent sans presque aucun repos, vous ranimer et vous consoler un peu!

Vous qui portez le poids du jour, je voudrais qu'il pût être, à votre pauvre âme fatiguée, ce qu'est, sur le midi, au coin d'un champ, l'ombre d'un arbre, si chétif qu'il soit, à celui qui a travaillé tout le matin sous les ardents rayons du soleil.

Vous vivez en des temps mauvais, mais ces temps passeront.

Après les rigueurs de l'hiver, la Providence ramène une saison moins rude, et le petit oiseau bénit, dans ses chants, la main bienfaisante qui lui a rendu et la chaleur et l'abondance, et sa compagne et son doux nid.

Espérez et aimez. L'espérance adoucit tout, et l'amour rend toutes choses possibles.

Il y a, en ce moment, des hommes qui souffrent beaucoup, parce qu'ils vous ont aimé beaucoup. Moi, leur frère, j'ai écrit le récit de ce qu'ils ont fait pour vous et de ce qu'on a fait contre eux à cause de cela, et, lorsque la violence se sera usée d'elle-même, je le publierai, et vous le lirez avec des pleurs alors moins amers, et vous aimerez aussi ces hommes qui vous ont tant aimé.

A présent, si je vous parlais de leur amour et de leurs souffrances, on me jetterait avec eux dans les cachots.

J'y descendrais avec une grande joie, si votre misère en pouvait être un peu allégée; mais vous n'en retireriez aucun soulagement, et c'est pourquoi il faut attendre et prier Dieu qu'il abrége l'épreuve.

Maintenant ce sont les hommes qui jugent et qui frappent : bientôt ce sera lui qui jugera. Heureux qui verra sa justice!

Je suis vieux : écoutez les paroles d'un vieillard.

La terre est triste et desséchée, mais elle reverdira. L'haleine du méchant ne passera pas éternellement sur elle comme un souffle qui brûle.

Ce qui se fait, la Providence veut que cela se fasse pour votre instruction, afin que vous appreniez à être bons et justes quand votre heure viendra.

Lorsque ceux qui abusent de la puissance auront passé devant vous comme la boue des ruisseaux en un jour d'orage, alors vous comprendrez que le bien seul est durable, et vous craindrez de souiller l'air que le vent du ciel aura purifié.

Préparez vos âmes pour ce temps, car il n'est pas loin, il approche.

Le Christ, mis en croix pour vous, a promis de vous délivrer.

Croyez-en sa promesse, et, pour en hâter l'accomplissement, réformez ce qui, en vous, a besoin de réforme; exercez-vous à toutes les vertus, et aimez-vous les uns les autres, comme le Sauveur de la race humaine vous a aimés, jusqu'a la mort.

PAROLES D'UN CROYANT,

4833.

I.

Au nom du Père, et du Fils, et du Saint-Esprit. Amen.

Gloire à Dieu dans les hauteurs des cieux, et paix sur la terre aux hommes de bonne volonté.

Que celui qui a des oreilles entende; que celui qui a des yeux les ouvre et regarde, car les temps approchent. Le Père a engendré son Fils, sa parole, son Verbe, et le Verbe s'est fait chair, et il a habité parmi nous; il est venu dans le monde, et le monde ne l'a point connu.

Le Fils a promis d'envoyer l'Esprit consolateur, l'Esprit qui procède du Père et de lui, et qui est leur amour mutuel; il viendra et renouvellera la face de la terre, et ce sera comme une seconde création.

Il y a dix-huit siècles, le Verbe répandit la semence divine, et l'Esprit saint la féconda. Les hommes l'ont vue fleurir, ils ont goûté de ses fruits, des fruits de l'arbre de vie replanté dans leur pauvre demeure.

Je vous le dis, ce fut parmi eux une grande joie quand ils virent paraître la lumière, et se sentirent tout pénétrés d'un feu céleste.

A présent la terre est redevenue ténébreuse et froide.

Nos pères ont vu le soleil décliner. Quand il descendit sous l'horizon, toute la race humaine tressaillit. Puis il y eut, dans cette nuit, je ne sais quoi qui n'a pas de nom. Enfants de la nuit, le couchant est noir, mais l'orient commence à blanchir. mand of track a column part and following sub-time to

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Prêtez l'oreille, et dites-moi d'où vient ce bruit confus, vague, étrange, que l'on entend de tous côtés.

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Posez la main sur la terre, et dites-moi pourquoi elle a tressailli.

Quelque chose que nous ne savons pas se remue dans le monde : il y a là un travail de Dieu.

Est-ce que chacun n'est pas dans l'attente? est-ce qu'il y a un cœur qui ne batte pas?

Fils de l'homme, monte sur les hauteurs, et annonce ce que tu vois. Je vois à l'horizon un nuage livide, et autour une lueur rouge comme le reflet d'un incendie.

Fils de l'homme, que vois-tu encore?

Je vois la mer soulever ses flots, et les montagnes agiter leurs cimes.

Je vois les fleuves changer leur cours, les collines chanceler, et, en tombant, combler les vallées.

Tout s'ébranle, tout se meut, tout prend un nouvel aspect.

Fils de l'homme, que vois-tu encore?

Je vois des tourbillons de poussière dans le lointain, et ils vont en tout sens, et se choquent, et se mèlent et se confondent. Ils passent sur les cités, et, quand ils ont passé, on ne voit plus que la plaine.

Je vois les peuples se lever en tumulte et les rois pâlir sous leur diadème. La guerre est entre eux, une guerre à mort.

Je vois un trône, deux trônes brisés, et les peuples en dispersent les débris sur la terre.

Je vois un peuple combattre comme l'archange Michel combattait contre Satan. Ses coups sont terribles; mais il est nu, et son ennemi est couvert d'une épaisse armure.

O Dieu! il tombe; il est frappé à mort. Non, il n'est que blessé. Marie, la vierge mère, l'enveloppe de son manteau, lui sourit, et l'emporte pour un peu de temps hors du combat.

Je vois un autre peuple lutter sans relâche, et puiser de moment en moment des forces nouvelles dans cette lutte. Ce peuple a le signe du Christ sur le cœur. Je vois un troisième peuple sur lequel six rois ont mis le pied; et, toutes les fois qu'il fait un mouvement, six poignards s'enfoncent dans sa gorge.

Je vois sur un vaste édifice, à une grande hauteur dans les airs, une croix que je distingue à peine, parce qu'elle est couverte d'un voile noir.

Fils de l'homme, que vois-tu encore?

Je vois l'Orient qui se trouble en lui-même. Il regarde ses antiques palais crouler, ses vieux temples tomber en poudre, et il lève les yeux comme pour chercher d'autres grandeurs et un autre Dieu.

Je vois, vers l'occident, une femme à l'œil fier, au front serein; elle trace d'une main ferme un léger sillon, et, partout où le soc passe, je vois se lever des générations humaines qui l'invoquent dans leurs prières et la bénissent dans leurs chants.

Je vois, au septentrion, des hommes qui n'ont plus qu'un reste de chaleur concentrée dans leur tête, et qui l'enivre : mais le Christ les touche de sa croix, et le cœur recommence à battre.

Je vois, au midi, des races affaissées sous je ne sais quelle malédiction: un joug pesant les accable, elles marchent courbées; mais le Christ les touche de sa croix, et elles se redressent.

Fils de l'homme, que vois-tu encore?
Il ne répond point : crions de nouveau.

Fils de l'homme, que vois-tu?

Je vois Satan qui fuit, et le Christ entouré de ses anges qui vient pour régner.



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Et je fus transporté en esprit dans les temps anciens, et la terre était belle, et riche, et féconde; et ses habitants vivaient heureux, parce qu'ils vivaient en frères.

Et je vis le Serpent qui se glissait au milieu d'eux : il fixa sur plusieurs son regard puissant, et leur àme se troubla, et ils s'approchèrent, et le Serpent leur parla à l'oreille.

Et, après avoir écouté la parole du Serpent, ils

se levèrent et dirent : Nous sommes rois.

Et le soleil pâlit, et la terre prit une teinte fu-

nèbre, comme celle du linceul qui enveloppe les morts.

Et l'on entendit un sourd murmure, une longue plainte, et chacun trembla dans son cœur.

En vérité, je vous le dis, ce fut comme au jour où l'abîme rompit ses digues, et où déborda le déluge des grandes eaux.

La Peur s'en alla de cabane en cabane, car il n'y avait point encore de palais, et elle dit à chacun des choses secrètes qui le firent frissonner.

Et ceux qui avaient dit : Nous sommes rois, prirent un glaive, et suivirent la Peur de cabane en cabane.

Et il se passa là des mystères étranges; il y eut des chaînes, des pleurs et du sang.

Les hommes, effrayés, s'écrièrent: Le meurtre a reparu dans le monde. Et ce fut tout, parce que la Peur avait transi leur âme, et ôté le mouvement à leurs bras.

Et ils se laissèrent charger de fers, eux et leurs femmes et leurs enfants. Et ceux qui avaient dit: Nous sommes rois, creusèrent comme une grande caverne; et ils y enfermèrent toute la race humaine, ainsi qu'on enferme des animaux dans une étable.

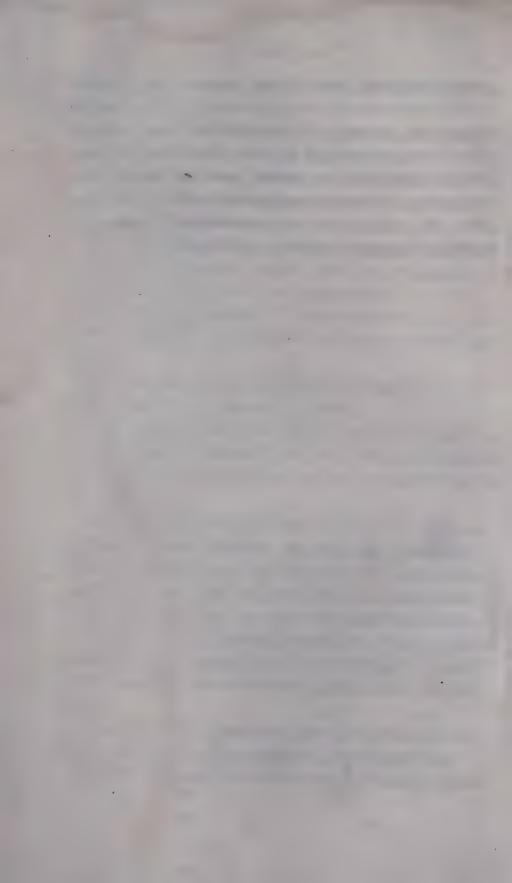
Et la tempète chassait les nuages, et le tonnerre grondait, et j'entendis une voix qui disait: Le Serpent a vaincu une seconde fois, mais pas pour toujours.

Après cela je n'entendis plus que des voix confuses, des rires, des sanglots, des blasphèmes.

Et je compris qu'il devait y avoir un règne de Satan

avant le règne de Dieu. Et je pleurai, et j'espérai.

Et la vision que je vis était vraie : car le règne de Satan s'est accompli, et le règne de Dieu s'accomplira aussi; et ceux qui ont dit : Nous sommes rois, seront à leur tour renfermés dans la caverne avec le Serpent, et la race humaine en sortira; et ce sera pour elle comme une autre naissance, comme le passage de la mort à la vie. Ainsi soit-il.



Vous êtes fils d'un même père, et la même mère vous a allaités; pourquoi donc ne vous aimez-vous pas les uns les autres comme des frères? et pourquoi vous traitez-vous bien plutôt en ennemis?

Celui qui n'aime pas son frère est maudit sept fois, et celui qui se fait l'ennemi de son frère est maudit septante fois sept fois.

C'est pourquoi les rois et les princes, et tous ceux que le monde appelle grands, ont été maudits : ils n'ont point aimé leurs frères et ils les ont traités en ennemis. Aimez-vous les uns les autres, et vous ne craindrez ni les grands, ni les princes, ni les rois.

Ils ne sont forts contre vous que parce que vous n'êtes point unis, que parce que vous ne vous aimez pas comme des frères les uns les autres.

Ne dites point : Celui-là est d'un peuple, et moi je suis d'un autre peuple. Car tous les peuples ont eu sur la terre le même père, qui est Adam, et ont dans le ciel le même père, qui est Dieu.

Si l'on frappe un membre, tout le corps souffre. Vous êtes tous un même corps : on ne peut opprimer l'un de vous, que tous ne soient opprimés.

Si un loup se jette sur un troupeau, il ne le dévore pas tout entier sur-le-champ: il saisit un mouton et le mange. Puis, sa faim étant revenue, il en saisit un autre et le mange: et ainsi jusqu'au dernier; car sa faim revient toujours.

Ne soyez pas comme les moutons, qui, lorsque le loup a enlevé l'un d'eux, s'effraient un moment et puis se remettent à paître. Car, pensent-ils, peut-être se contentera-t-il d'une première ou d'une seconde proie : et qu'ai-je affaire de m'inquiéter de ceux qu'il dévore? Qu'est-ce que cela me fait, à moi? il ne me restera que plus d'herbe.

En vérité, je vous le dis, ceux qui pensent ainsi en eux-mêmes sont marqués pour être la pâture de la bête qui vit de chair et de sang. V

Quand vous voyez un homme conduit en prison et au supplice, ne vous pressez pas de dire: Celui-là est un homme méchant, qui a commis un crime contre les hommes:

Car peut-être est-ce un homme de bien, qui a voulu servir les hommes, et qui en est puni par leurs oppresseurs.

Quand vous voyez un peuple chargé de fers et livré au bourreau, ne vous pressez pas de dire : Ce peuple est un peuple violent, qui voulait troubler la paix de la terre : Car peut-ètre est-ce un peuple martyr, qui meurt pour le salut du genre humain.

Il y a dix-huit siècles, dans une ville d'Orient, les pontifes et les rois de ce temps-là clouèrent sur une croix, après l'avoir battu de verges, un séditieux, un blasphémateur, comme ils l'appelaient.

Le jour de sa mort, il y eut une grande terreur dans l'enfer, et une grande joie dans le ciel : Car le sang du Juste avait sauvé le monde. and the second second second

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Pourquoi les animaux trouvent-ils leur nourriture, chacun suivant son espèce? c'est que nul parmi eux ne dérobe celle d'autrui, et que chacun se contente de ce qui suffit à ses besoins.

Si, dans la ruche, une abeille disait: Tout le miel qui est ici est à moi, et que là-dessus elle se mît à disposer, comme elle l'entendrait, des fruits du travail commun, que deviendraient les autres abeilles?

La terre est comme une grande ruche, et les hommes sont comme des abeilles. Chaque abeille a droit à la portion de miel nécessaire à sa subsistance; et si, parmi les hommes, il en est qui manquent de ce nécessaire, c'est que la justice et la charité ont disparu d'au milieu d'eux.

La justice, c'est la vie; et la charité, c'est encore la vie, et une plus douce et une plus abondante vie.

Il s'est rencontré de faux prophètes qui ont persuadé à quelques hommes que tous les autres étaient nés pour eux; et ce que ceux-ci ont cru, les autres l'ont cru aussi sur la parole des faux prophètes.

Lorsque cette parole de mensonge prévalut, les anges pleurèrent dans le ciel, car ils prévirent que beaucoup de violences, et beaucoup de crimes, et beaucoup de maux, allaient déborder sur la terre.

Les hommes, égaux entre eux, sont nés pour Dieu seul, et quiconque dit une chose contraire dit un blasphème.

Que celui qui veut être le plus grand parmi vous soit votre serviteur; et que celui qui veut être le premier parmi vous soit le serviteur de tous.

La loi de Dieu est une loi d'amour, et l'amour ne s'élève point au-dessus des autres, mais il se sacrifie aux autres.

Celui qui dit dans son cœur : Je ne suis pas comme les autres hommes, mais les autres hommes m'ont êté donnés pour que je leur commande, et que je dispose d'eux et de ce qui est à eux à ma fantaisie; celui-là est fils de Satan.

Et Satan est le roi de ce monde, car il est le roi

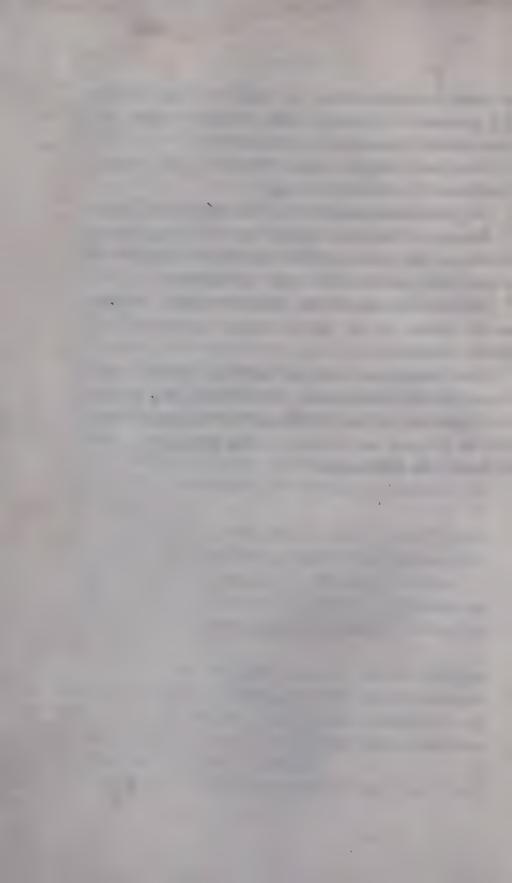
de tous ceux qui pensent et agissent ainsi; et ceux qui pensent et agissent ainsi se sont rendus, par ses conseils, les maîtres du monde.

Mais leur empire n'aura qu'un temps, et nous touchons à la fin de ce temps.

Un grand combat sera livré, et l'ange de la justice et l'ange de l'amour combattront avec ceux qui se seront armés pour rétablir parmi les hommes le règne de la justice et le règne de l'amour.

Et beaucoup mourront dans ce combat, et leur nom restera sur la terre comme un rayon de la gloire de Dieu.

C'est pourquoi, vous qui souffrez, prenez courage, fortifiez votre cœur : car demain sera le jour de l'épreuve, le jour où chacun devra donner avec joie sa vie pour ses frères; et celui qui suivra, sera le jour de la délivrance.



VII.

Lorsqu'un arbre est seul, il est battu des vents et dépouillé de ses feuilles; et ses branches, au lieu de s'élever, s'abaissent comme si elles cherchaient la terre.

Lorsqu'une plante est seule, ne trouvant point d'abri contre l'ardeur du soleil, elle languit et se dessèche, et meurt.

Lorsque l'homme est seul, le vent de la puissance le courbe vers la terre, et l'ardeur de la convoitise des grands de ce monde absorbe la sève qui le nourrit. Ne soyez donc point comme la plante et comme l'arbre qui sont seuls : mais unissez-vous les uns aux autres, et appuyez-vous, et abritez-vous mutuellement.

Tandis que vous serez désunis, et que chacun ne songera qu'à soi, vous n'avez rien à espérer que souffrance, et malheur, et oppression.

Qu'y a-t-il de plus faible que le passereau, et de plus désarmé que l'hirondelle? Cependant, quand paraît l'oiseau de proie, les hirondelles et les passereaux parviennent à le chasser, en se rassemblant autour de lui, et le poursuivant tous ensemble.

Prenez exemple sur le passereau et sur l'hirondelle.

Celui qui se sépare de ses frères, la crainte le suit quand il marche, s'assied près de lui quand il repose, et ne le quitte pas même durant son sommeil.

Donc, si l'on vous demande: Combien ètes-vous? répondez: Nous sommes un, car nos frères c'est nous, et nous c'est nos frères.

Dieu n'a fait ni petits ni grands, ni maîtres ni esclaves, ni rois ni sujets : il a fait tous les hommes égaux.

Mais, entre les hommes, quelques-uns ont plus de force ou de corps, ou d'esprit, ou de volonté, et ce sont ceux-là qui cherchent à s'assujettir les autres, lorsque l'orgueil ou la convoitise étouffe en eux l'amour de leurs frères.

Et Dieu savait qu'il en serait ainsi, et c'est pourquoi il a commandé aux hommes de s'aimer, afin qu'ils fussent unis, et que les faibles ne tombassent point sous l'oppression des forts.

Car celui qui est plus fort qu'un seul sera moins fort que deux, et celui qui est plus fort que deux sera moins fort que quatre; et ainsi les faibles ne craindront rien, lorsque, s'aimant les uns les autres, ils seront unis véritablement.

Un homme voyageait dans la montagne, et il arriva en un lieu où un gros rocher, ayant roulé sur le chemin, le remplissait tout entier, et hors du chemin il n'y avait point d'autre issue, ni à gauche, ni à droite.

Or, cet homme, voyant qu'il ne pouvait continuer son voyage à cause du rocher, essaya de le mouvoir pour se faire un passage, et il se fatigua beaucoup à ce travail, et tous ses efforts furent vains.

Ce que voyant, il s'assit plein de tristesse et dit: Que sera-ce de moi lorsque la nuit viendra et me surprendra dans cette solitude, sans nourriture, sans abri, sans aucune défense, à l'heure où les bètes féroces sortent pour chercher leur proie?

Et, comme il était absorbé dans cette pensée, un autre voyageur survint, et celui-ci, ayant fait ce qu'avait fait le premier et s'étant trouvé aussi impuissant à remuer le rocher, s'assit en silence et baissa la tète.

Et après celui-ci, il en vint plusieurs autres, et aucun ne put mouvoir le rocher, et leur crainte à tous était grande.

Enfin, l'un d'eux dit aux autres : Mes frères, prions notre Père qui est dans les cieux; peutêtre qu'il aura pitié de nous dans cette détresse.

Et cette parole fut écoutée, et ils prièrent de cœur le Père qui est dans les cieux.

Et, quand ils eurent prié, celui qui avait dit: Prions, dit encore: Mes frères, ce qu'aucun de nous n'a pu faire seul, qui sait si nous ne le ferons pas tous ensemble?

Et ils se levèrent, et tous ensemble ils poussèrent le rocher, et le rocher céda, et ils poursuivirent leur route en paix.

Le voyageur c'est l'homme, le voyage c'est la vie, le rocher ce sont les misères qu'il rencontre à chaque pas sur sa route.

Aucun homme ne saurait soulever seul ce rocher; mais Dieu en a mesuré le poids de manière qu'il n'arrète jamais ceux qui voyagent ensemble.

VIII.

Au commencement, le travail n'était pas nécessaire à l'homme pour vivre : la terre fournissait d'elle-même à tous ses besoins.

Mais l'homme fit le mal; et, comme il s'était révolté contre Dieu, la terre se révolta contre lui.

Il lui arriva ce qui arrive à l'enfant qui se révolte contre son père : le père lui retire son amour, et il l'abandonne à lui-mème; et les serviteurs de la maison refusent de le servir, et il s'en va cherchant çà et là sa pauvre vie, et mangeant le pain qu'il a gagné à la sueur de son visage. Depuis lors donc, Dieu a condamné tous les hommes au travail: et tous ont leur labeur, soit du corps, soit de l'esprit; et ceux qui disent: Je ne travaillerai point, sont les plus misérables.

Car, comme les vers dévorent un cadavre, les vices les dévorent; et, si ce ne sont les vices, c'est

l'ennui.

Et, quand Dieu voulut que l'homme travaillât, il cacha un trésor dans le travail, parce qu'il est père, et que l'amour d'un père ne meurt point.

Et celui qui fait un bon usage de ce trésor, et qui ne le dissipe point en insensé, il vient pour lui un temps de repos; et alors il est comme les hommes étaient au commencement.

Et Dieu leur donna encore ce précepte: Aidezvous les uns les autres, car il y en a parmi vous de plus forts et de plus faibles, d'infirmes et de bien portants; et cependant tous doivent vivre.

Et, si vous faites ainsi, tous vivront, parce que je récompenserai la pitié que vous aurez eue pour vos frères, et je rendrai votre sueur féconde.

Et ce que Dieu a promis s'est vérifié toujours, et jamais on n'a vu celui qui aide ses frères manquer de pain.

Or, il y eut autrefois un homme méchant et maudit du ciel. Et cet homme était fort, et il haïssait le travail; de sorte qu'il se dit : Comment ferai-je? si je ne travaille point, je mourrai; et le travail m'est insupportable.

Alors il lui entra une pensée de l'enfer dans le cœur. Il s'en alla de nuit, et saisit quelques-uns de ses frères pendant qu'ils dormaient, et les chargea de chaînes.

Car, disait-il, je les forcerai, avec les verges et le fouet, à travailler pour moi, et je mangerai le fruit de leur travail.

Et il fit ce qu'il avait pensé: et d'autres, voyant cela, en firent autant, et il n'y eut plus de frères; il y eut des maîtres et des esclaves.

Ce jour fut un jour de deuil sur toute la terre.

Longtemps après, il y eut un autre homme plus méchant que le premier et plus maudit du ciel.

Voyant que les hommes s'étaient partout multipliés, et que leur multitude était innombrable, il se dit:

Je pourrais bien, peut-être, en enchaîner quelquesuns et les forcer à travailler pour moi; mais il les faudrait nourrir, et cela diminuerait mon gain. Faisons mieux, qu'ils travaillent pour rien. Ils mourront à la vérité; mais, comme leur nombre est grand, j'amasserai des richesses avant qu'ils aient diminué beaucoup; et il en restera toujours assez.

Or, toute cette multitude vivait de ce qu'elle recevait en échange de son travail.

Ayant donc parlé de la sorte, il s'adressa en particulier à quelques-uns, et il leur dit : Vous travaillez pendant six heures, et l'on vous donne une pièce de monnaie pour votre travail;

Travaillez pendant douze heures, et vous gagnerez deux pièces de monnaie, et vous vivrez bien mieux, vous, vos femmes et vos enfants.

Et ils le crurent.

Il leur dit ensuite : Vous ne travaillez que la moitié des jours de l'année ; travaillez tous les jours de l'année , et votre gain sera double.

Et ils le crurent encore.

Or, il arriva de là que la quantité de travail étant devenue plus grande de moitié, sans que le besoin de travail fût plus grand, la moitié de ceux qui vivaient auparavant de leur labeur, ne trouvèrent plus personne qui les employât.

Alors l'homme méchant qu'ils avaient cru, leur dit: Je vous donnerai du travail à tous, à la condition que vous travaillerez le même temps, et que je ne vous paierai que la moitié de ce que je vous payais; car je veux bien vous rendre service, mais je ne veux pas me ruiner.

Et, comme ils avaient faim, eux, leurs femmes et leurs enfants, ils acceptèrent la proposition de l'homme méchant, et ils le bénirent : car, disaientils, il nous donne la vie.

Et, continuant de les tromper de la mème manière, l'homme méchant augmenta toujours plus leur travail, et diminua toujours plus leur salaire.

Et ils mouraient faute du nécessaire, et d'autres s'empressaient de les remplacer, car l'indigence était devenue si profonde dans ce pays, que les familles entières se vendaient pour un morceau de pain.

Et l'homme méchant, qui avait menti à ses frères, amassa plus de richesses que l'homme méchant qui les avait enchaînés.

Le nom de celui-ci est tyran; l'autre n'a de nom qu'en enfer.

Vous êtes dans ce monde comme des étrangers. Allez au nord et au midi, à l'orient et à l'occident, en quelque endroit que vous vous arrêtiez, vous trouverez un homme qui vous en chassera, en disant : Ce champ est à moi.

Et, après avoir parcouru tous les pays, vous reviendrez sachant qu'il n'y a nulle part un pauvre petit coin de terre où votre femme en travail puisse enfanter son premier-né, où vous puissiez reposer après votre labeur, où, arrivé au dernier terme, vos enfants puissent enfouir vos os, comme dans un lieu qui soit à vous.

C'est là, certes, une grande misère.

Et pourtant vous ne devez pas vous trop affliger, car il est écrit de celui qui a sauvé la race humaine :

Le renard a sa tanière, les oiseaux du ciel ont leur nid, mais le Fils de l'homme n'a pas où reposer sa tête.

Or, il s'est fait pauvre pour vous apprendre à supporter la pauvreté.

Ce n'est pas que la pauvreté vienne de Dieu, mais elle est une suite de la corruption et des mauvaises convoitises de l'homme; et c'est pourquoi il y aura toujours des pauvres.

La pauvreté est fille du péché, dont le germe est en chaque homme, et de la servitude, dont le germe est en chaque société.

Il y aura toujours des pauvres, parce que l'homme ne détruira jamais le péché en soi.

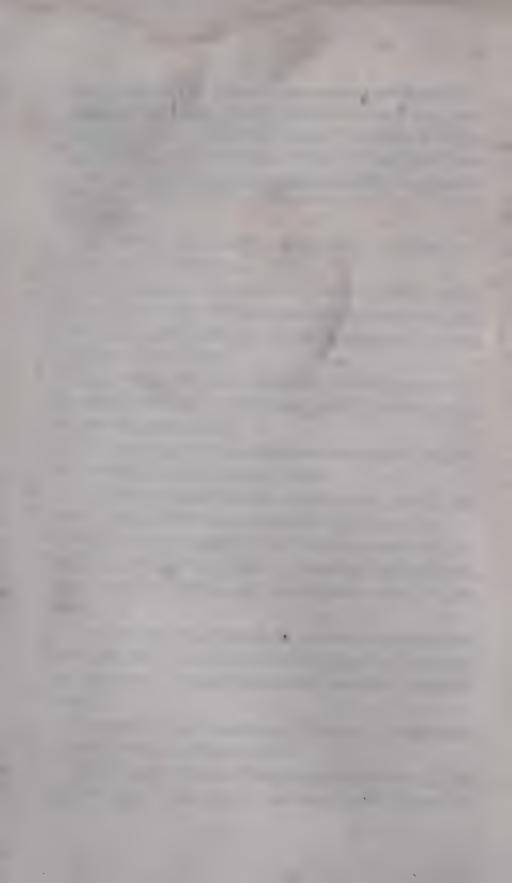
Il y aura toujours moins de pauvres, parce que peu à peu la servitude disparaîtra de la société.

Voulez-vous travailler à détruire la pauvreté, travaillez à détruire le péché, en vous premièrement, puis dans les autres, et la servitude dans la société.

Ce n'est pas en prenant ce qui est à autrui qu'on peut détruire la pauvreté; car comment, en faisant des pauvres, diminuerait-on le nombre des pauvres?

Chacun a droit de conserver ce qu'il a, sans quoi personne ne posséderait rien.

Mais chacun a droit d'acquérir par son travail ce qu'il n'a pas, sans quoi la pauvreté serait éternelle. Affranchissez donc votre travail, affranchissez vos bras; et la pauvreté ne sera plus parmi les hommes qu'une exception permise de Dieu, pour leur rappeler l'infirmité de leur nature et le secours mutuel et l'amour qu'ils se doivent les uns aux autres.



the second second second

Lorsque toute la terre gémissait dans l'attente de la délivrance, une voix s'éleva de la Judée, la voix de celui qui venait souffrir et mourir pour ses frères, et que quelques-uns appelaient par dédain le Fils du charpentier.

Le Fils donc du charpentier, pauvre et délaissé en ce monde, disait :

« Venez à moi, vous tous qui haletez sous le « poids du travail, et je vous ranimerai. »

Et, depuis ce temps-là jusqu'à ce jour, pas un de ceux qui ont cru en lui n'est demeuré sans soulagement dans sa misère. Pour guérir les maux qui affligent les hommes, il prèchait à tous la justice qui est le commencement de la charité, et la charité qui est la consommation de la justice.

Or, la justice commande de respecter le droit d'autrui, et quelquefois la charité veut que l'on abandonne le sien mème, à cause de la paix ou de quelque autre bien.

Que serait le monde, si le droit cessait d'y régner, si chacun n'était en sûreté de sa personne, et ne jouissait sans crainte de ce qui lui appartient?

Mieux vaudrait vivre au sein des forêts, que dans une société ainsi livrée au brigandage.

Ce que vous prendrez aujourd'hui, un autre vous le prendra demain. Les hommes seront plus misérables que les oiseaux du ciel, à qui les autres oiseaux ne ravissent ni leur pâture ni leur nid.

Qu'est-ce qu'un pauvre? C'est celui qui n'a point encore de propriété.

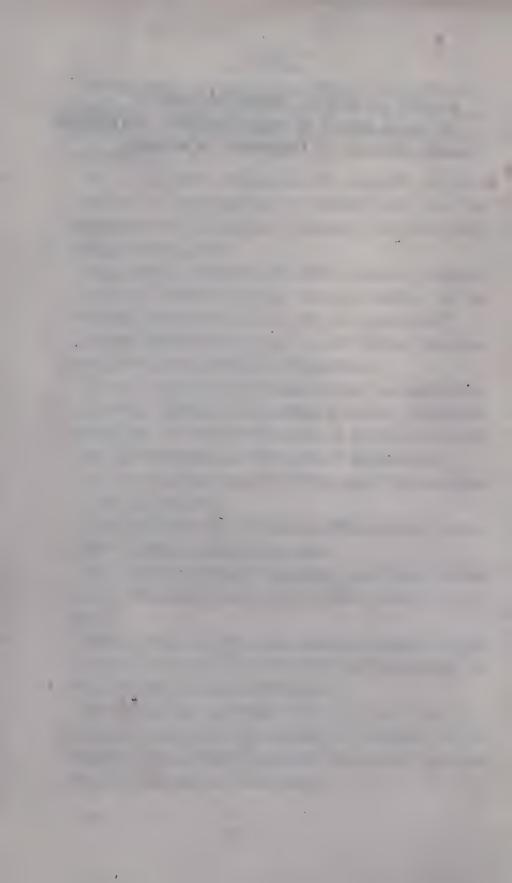
Que souhaite-t-il? De cesser d'être pauvre, c'està-dire d'acquérir une propriété.

Or, celui qui dérobe, qui pille, que fait-il, sinon abolir, autant qu'il est en lui, le droit mème de propriété?

Piller, voler, c'est donc attaquer le pauvre aussi bien que le riche; c'est renverser le fondement de toute société parmi les hommes.

Quiconque ne possède rien, ne peut arriver à posséder que parce que d'autres possèdent déjà, puisque ceux-là seuls peuvent lui donner quelque chose en échange de son travail.

L'ordre est le bien, l'intérêt de tous. Ne buvez point à la coupe du crime : au fond est l'amère détresse, et l'angoisse, et la mort.



Et j'avais vu les maux qui arrivent sur la terre, le faible opprimé, le juste mendiant son pain, le méchant élevé aux honneurs et regorgeant de richesses, l'innocent condamné par des juges iniques, et ses enfants errants sous le soleil.

Et mon âme était triste, et l'espérance en sortait de toutes parts comme d'un vase brisé.

Et Dieu m'envoya un profond sommeil.

Et, dans mon sommeil, je vis comme une forme lumineuse, debout près de moi, un Esprit, dont le regard doux et perçant pénétrait jusqu'au fond de mes pensées les plus secrètes. Et je tressaillis, non de crainte ni de joie, mais comme d'un sentiment qui serait un mélange inexprimable de l'une et de l'autre.

Et l'Esprit me dit : Pourquoi es-tu triste?

Et je répondis en pleurant : Oh! voyez les maux qui sont sur la terre.

Et la forme céleste se prit à sourire d'un sourire ineffable, et cette parole vint à mon oreille :

Ton œil ne voit rien qu'à travers ce milieu trompeur que les créatures nomment le temps. Le temps n'est que pour toi : il n'y a point de temps pour Dieu.

Et je me taisais, car je ne comprenais pas.

Tout à coup l'Esprit: Regarde, dit-il.

Et, sans qu'il y eût désormais pour moi ni avant ni après, en un même instant, je vis à la fois ce que, dans leur langue infirme et défaillante, les hommes appellent passé, présent, avenir.

Et tout cela n'était qu'un; et cependant, pour dire ce que je vis, il faut que je redescende au sein du temps, il faut que je parle la langue infirme et défaillante des hommes.

Et toute la race humaine me paraissait comme un seul homme.

Et cet homme avait fait beaucoup de mal, peu de bien; avait senti beaucoup de douleurs, peu de joies.

Et il était là , gisant dans sa misère , sur une terre tantôt glacée , tantôt brûlante ; maigre , affamé , souffrant , affaissé , d'une langueur entremèlée de convulsions , accablé de chaînes forgées dans la demeure des démons . Sa main droite en avait chargé sa main gauche, et la gauche en avait chargé la droite, et, au milieu de ses rèves mauvais, il s'était tellement roulé dans ses fers, que tout son corps en était couvert et serré.

Car, dès qu'ils le touchaient seulement, ils se collaient à sa peau comme du plomb bouillant, ils entraient dans la chair et n'en sortaient plus.

Et c'était là l'homme, je le reconnus.

Et voilà, un rayon de lumière partait de l'orient, et un rayon d'amour du midi, et un rayon de force du septentrion.

Et ces trois rayons s'unirent sur le cœur de cet homme.

Et, quand partit le rayon de lumière, une voix dit: Fils de Dieu, frère du Christ, sache ce que tu dois savoir.

Et, quand partit le rayon d'amour, une voix dit: Fils de Dieu, frère du Christ, aime qui tu dois aimer.

Et, quand partit le rayon de force, une voix dit : Fils de Dieu, frère du Christ, fais ce qui doit être fait.

Et, quand les trois rayons se furent unis, les trois voix s'unirent aussi, et il s'en forma une seule voix qui dit:

Fils de Dieu, frère du Christ, sers Dieu et ne sers que lui seul.

Et alors ce qui jusque-là ne m'avait semblé qu'un homme, m'apparut comme une multitude de peuples et de nations. Et mon premier regard ne m'avait pas trompé, et le second ne me trompait pas non plus.

Et ces peuples et ces nations, se réveillant sur leur lit d'angoisse, commencèrent à se dire :

D'où viennent nos souffrances et notre langueur, et la faim et la soif qui nous tourmentent, et les chaînes qui nous courbent vers la terre et entrent dans notre chair?

Et leur intelligence s'ouvrit, et ils comprirent que les fils de Dieu, les frères du Christ, n'avaient pas été condamnés par leur père à l'esclavage, et que cet esclavage était la source de tous leurs maux.

Chacun donc essaya de rompre ses fers, mais nul n'y parvint.

Et ils se regardèrent les uns les autres avec une grande pitié, et, l'amour agissant en eux, ils se dirent: Nous avons tous la même pensée, pourquoi n'aurions-nous pas tous le même cœur? ne sommes-nous pas tous les fils du même Dieu et les frères du même Christ? Sauvons-nous, ou mourons ensemble.

Et, ayant dit cela, ils sentirent en eux une force divine, et j'entendis leurs chaînes craquer, et ils combattirent six jours contre ceux qui les avaient enchaînés, et le sixième jour ils furent vainqueurs, et le septième fut un jour de repos.

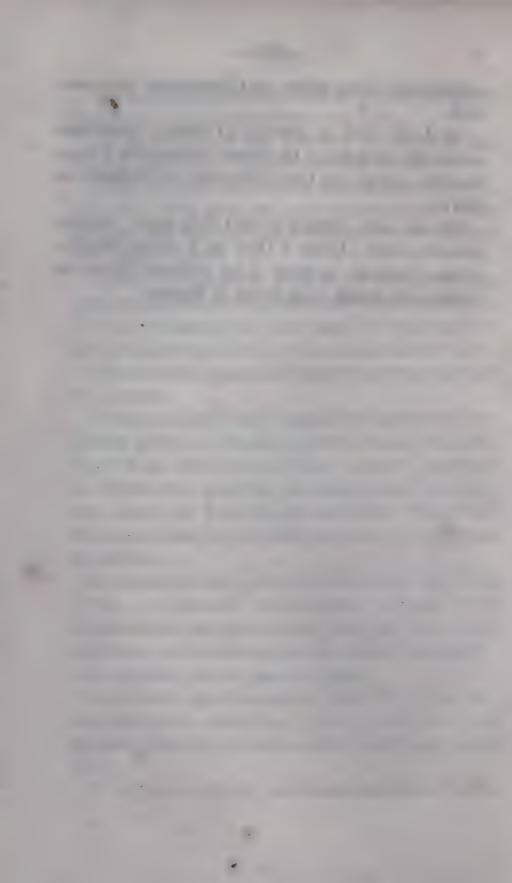
Et la terre, qui était sèche, reverdit, et tous purent manger de ses fruits, et aller et venir sans que personne leur dît : Où allez-vous? on ne passe point ici.

Et les petits enfants cueillaient des fleurs, et les

apportaient à leur mère, qui doucement leur souriait.

Et il n'y avait ni pauvres ni riches, mais tous avaient en abondance les choses nécessaires à leurs besoins, parce que tous s'aimaient et s'aidaient en frères.

Et une voix, comme la voix d'un ange, retentit dans les cieux : Gloire à Dieu qui a donné l'intelligence, l'amour, la force à ses enfants! gloire au Christ qui a rendu à ses frères la liberté!



Lorsqu'un de vous souffre une injustice; lorsque, dans sa route à travers le monde, l'oppresseur le renverse, et met le pied sur lui: s'il se plaint, nul ne l'entend.

Le cri du pauvre monte jusqu'à Dieu, mais il n'arrive pas à l'oreille de l'homme.

Et je me suis demandé: D'où vient ce mal? estce que celui qui a créé le pauvre comme le riche, le faible comme le puissant, aurait voulu ôter aux uns toute crainte dans leurs iniquités, aux autres toute espérance dans leur misère? Et j'ai vu que c'était là une pensée horrible, un blasphème contre Dieu.

Parce que chacun de vous n'aime que soi, parce qu'il se sépare de ses frères, parce qu'il est seul et veut ètre seul, sa plainte n'est point entendue.

Au printemps, lorsque tout se ranime, il sort de l'herbe un bruit qui s'élève comme un long murmure.

Ce bruit, formé de tant de bruits qu'on ne les pourrait compter, est la voix d'un nombre innombrable de pauvres petites créatures imperceptibles.

Seule, aucune d'elles ne serait entendue : toutes ensemble, elles se font entendre.

Vous êtes aussi cachés sous l'herbe, pourquoi n'en sort-il aucune voix ?

Quand on veut passer une rivière rapide, on se forme en une longue file sur deux rangs, et, rapprochés de la sorte, ceux qui n'auraient pu, isolés des autres, résister à la force des eaux, la surmontent sans peine.

Faites ainsi, et vous romprez le cours de l'iniquité, qui vous emporte lorsque vous ètes seuls, et vous jette brisés sur la rive.

Que vos résolutions soient lentes, mais fermes. Ne vous laissez aller ni à un premier, ni à un second mouvement.

Mais, si l'on a commis contre vous quelque injustice, commencez par bannir tout sentiment de haine de votre cœur, et puis, levant les mains et les yeux en haut, dites à votre Père qui est dans les cieux: O Père, vous êtes le protecteur de l'innocent et de l'opprimé; car c'est votre amour qui a créé le monde, et c'est votre justice qui le gouverne.

Vous voulez qu'elle règne sur la terre, et le

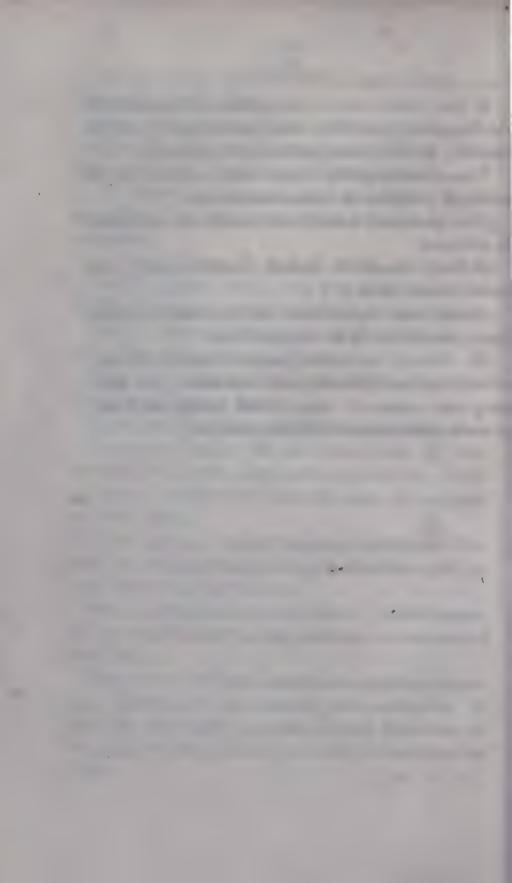
méchant y oppose sa volonté mauvaise.

C'est pourquoi nous avons résolu de combattre le méchant.

O Père! donnez le conseil à notre esprit, et la force à notre bras!

Quand vous aurez ainsi prié du fond de votre âme, combattez et ne craignez rien.

Si, d'abord, la victoire paraît s'éloigner de vous, ce n'est qu'une épreuve, elle reviendra; car votre sang sera comme le sang d'Abel égorgé par Caïn, et votre mort comme celle des martyrs.



XIII.

C'était dans une nuit sombre ; un ciel sans astres pesait sur la terre, comme un couvercle de marbre noir sur un tombeau.

Et rien ne troublait le silence de cette nuit, si ce n'est un bruit étrange, comme d'un léger battement d'ailes, que de fois à autre on entendait au-dessus des campagnes et des cités;

Et alors les ténèbres s'épaississaient, et chacun sentait son âme se serrer et le frisson courir dans ses veines.

Et, dans une salle tendue de noir et éclairée d'une

lampe rougeâtre, sept hommes vêtus de poupre, et la tête ceinte d'une couronne, étaient assis sur sept siéges de fer.

Et au milieu de la salle s'élevait un trône composé d'ossements; et au pied du trône, en guise d'escabeau, était un crucifix renversé; et devant le trône, une table d'ébène; et sur la table, un vase plein de sang rouge et écumeux, et un crâne humain.

Et les sept hommes couronnés paraissaient pensifs et tristes, et, du fond de son orbite creux, leur œil, de temps en temps, laissait échapper des étincelles d'un feu livide.

Et l'un d'eux, s'étant levé, s'approcha du trône en chancelant, et mit le pied sur le crucifix.

En ce moment ses membres tremblèrent, et il sembla près de défaillir. Les autres le regardaient immobiles; ils ne firent pas le moindre mouvement, mais je ne sais quoi passa sur leur front, et un sourire qui n'est pas de l'homme contracta leurs lèvres.

Et celui qui avait semblé près de défaillir étendit la main, saisit le vase plein de sang, en versa dans le crâne, et le but.

Et cette boisson parut le fortifier.

Et, dressant la tête, ce cri sortit de sa poitrine comme un sourd râlement:

Maudit soit le Christ, qui a ramené sur la terre la Liberté!

Et les six autres hommes couronnés se levèrent tous ensemble, et tous ensemble poussèrent le même cri: Maudit soit le Christ, qui a ramené sur la terre la Liberté!

Après quoi, s'étant rassis sur leurs siéges de fer, le premier dit :

Mes frères, que ferons-nous pour étouffer la Liberté : car notre règne est fini, si le sien commence ? Notre cause est la même : que chacun propose ce qui semblera bon.

Voici, pour moi, le conseil que je donne. Avant que le Christ vînt, qui se tenait debout devant nous? C'est sa religion qui nous a perdus : abolissons la religion du Christ.

Et tous répondirent : Il est vrai. Abolissons la religion du Christ.

Et un second s'avança vers le trône, prit le crâne humain, y versa du sang, le but, et dit ensuite:

Ce n'est pas la religion seulement qu'il faut abolir, mais encore la science et la pensée; car la science veut connaître ce qu'il n'est pas bon pour nous que l'homme sache, et la pensée est toujours prête à regimber contre la force.

Et tous répondirent : Il est vrai. Abolissons la science et la pensée.

Et, ayant fait ce qu'avaient fait les deux premiers, un troisième dit:

Lorsque nous aurons replongé les hommes dans l'abrutissement en leur ôtant et la religion, et la science, et la pensée, nous aurons fait beaucoup, mais il nous restera quelque chose encore à faire.

La brute a des instincts et des sympathies dan-' gereuses. Il faut qu'aucun peuple n'entende la voix d'un autre peuple. de peur que, si celui-là se plaint et remue, celui-ci ne soit tenté de l'imiter. Qu'aucun bruit du dehors ne pénètre chez nous.

Et tous répondirent : Il est vrai. Qu'aucun bruit du dehors ne pénètre chez nous.

Et un quatrième dit : Nous avons notre intérêt, et les peuples ont aussi leur intérêt opposé au nôtre. S'ils s'unissent pour défendre contre nous cet intérèt, comment leur résisterons-nous?

Divisons pour régner. Créons à chaque province, à chaque ville, à chaque hameau, un intérêt contraire à celui des autres hameaux, des autres villes, des autres provinces.

De cette manière tous se haïront, et ils ne songeront pas à s'unir contre nous.

Et tous répondirent : Il est vrai. Divisons pour régner : la concorde nous tuerait.

Et un cinquième, ayant deux fois rempli de sang et vidé deux fois le crâne humain, dit:

J'approuve tous ces moyens, ils sont bons, mais insuffisants. Faites des brutes, c'est bien, mais effrayez ces brutes, frappez-les de terreur par une justice inexorable et par des supplices atroces, si vous ne voulez pas tôt ou tard en être dévorés. Le bourreau est le premier ministre d'un bon prince.

Et tous répondirent : Il est vrai. Le bourreau est le premier ministre d'un bon prince.

Et un sixième dit:

Je reconnais l'avantage des supplices prompts, terribles, inévitables. Cependant il y a des âmes fortes et des âmes désespérées qui bravent les supplices. Voulez-vous gouverner aisément les hommes, amollissez-les par la volupté. La vertu ne nous vaut rien; elle nourrit la force : épuisons-la plutôt par la corruption.

Et tous répondirent : Il est vrai. Épuisons la force, et l'énergie, et le courage, par la corruption.

Alors le septième ayant, comme les autres, bu dans le crâne humain, parla de la sorte, les pieds sur le crucifix:

Plus de Christ; il y a guerre à mort, guerre éternelle entre lui et nous.

Mais comment détacher de lui les peuples? C'est une tentative vaine. Que faire donc? Écoutez-moi : il faut gagner les prètres du Christ avec des biens , des honneurs et de la puissance.

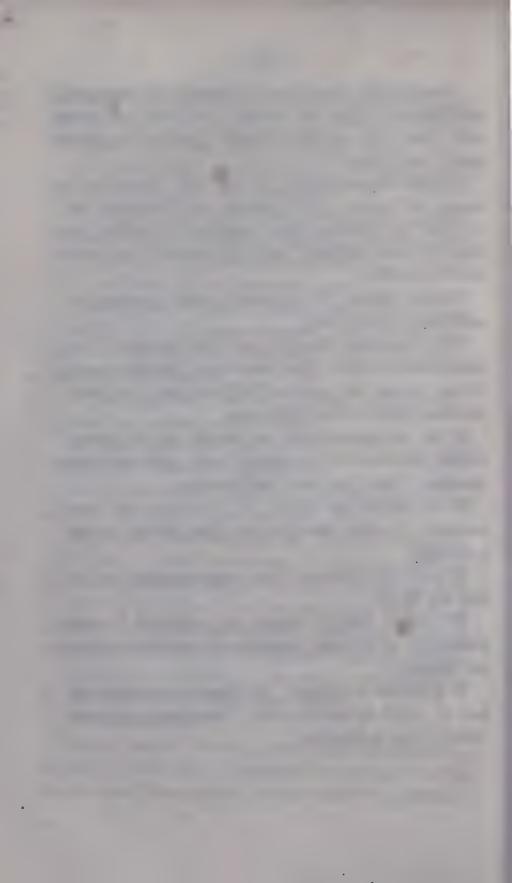
Et ils commanderont au peuple, de la part du Christ, de nous être soumis en tout, quoi que nous fassions, quoi que nous ordonnions;

Et le peuple les croira, et il obéira par conscience, et notre pouvoir sera plus affermi qu'auparavant.

Et tous répondirent : Il est vrai. Gagnons les prètres du Christ.

Et tout à coup la lampe qui éclairait la salle s'éteignit, et les sept hommes se séparèrent dans les ténèbres.

Et il fut dit à un juste, qui dans ce moment veillait et priait devant la croix : Mon jour approche. Adore et ne crains rien.



XIV.

Et, à travers un brouillard gris et lourd, je vis, comme on voit sur la terre à l'heure du crépuscule, une plaine nue, déserte et froide.

Au milieu s'élevait un rocher, d'où tombait goutte à goutte une eau noirâtre, et le bruit faible et sourd des gouttes qui tombaient était le seul bruit qu'on entendît.

Et sept sentiers, après avoir serpenté dans la plaine, venaient aboutir au rocher; et près du rocher, à l'entrée de chacun, était une pierre recouverte de je ne sais quoi d'humide et de vert, semblable à la bave d'un reptile. Et voilà, sur l'un des sentiers j'aperçus comme une ombre qui lentement se mouvait; et, peu à peu l'ombre s'approchant, je distinguai, non pas un homme, mais la ressemblance d'un homme.

Et, à l'endroit du cœur, cette forme humaine avait une tache de sang.

Et elle s'assit sur la pierre humide et verte, et ses membres grelottaient, et, la tête penchée, elle se serrait avec ses bras, comme pour retenir un reste de chaleur.

Et, par les six autres sentiers, six autres ombres successivement arrivèrent au pied du rocher.

Et chacune d'elles, grelottant et se serrant avec ses bras, s'assit sur la pierre humide et verte.

Et elles étaient là silencieuses, et courbées sous le poids d'une incompréhensible angoisse.

Et leur silence dura longtemps, je ne sais combien de temps, car jamais le soleil ne se lève sur cette plaine: on n'y connaît ni soir ni matin. Les gouttes d'eau noirâtre y mesurent seules, en tombant, une durée monotone, obscure, pesante, éternelle.

Et cela était si horrible à voir, que, si Dieu ne m'avait fortifié, je n'aurais pu en soutenir la vue.

Et, après une sorte de frissonnement convulsif, une des ombres, soulevant sa tête, fit entendre un son comme le son rauque et sec du vent qui bruit dans un squelette.

Et le rocher renvoya cette parole à mon oreille : Le Christ a vaincu : maudit soit-il!

Et les six autres ombres tressaillirent; et, toutes

ensemble soulevant la tête, le même blasphème sortit de leur sein :

Le Christ a vaincu: maudit soit-il!

Et aussitôt elles furent saisies d'un tremblement plus fort, le brouillard s'épaissit, et, pendant un moment, l'eau noirâtre cessa de couler.

Et les sept ombres avaient plié de nouveau sous le poids de leur angoisse secrète, et il y eut un second silence plus long que le premier.

Ensuite une d'elles, sans se lever de sa pierre,

immobile et penchée dit aux autres:

Il vous est donc advenu ainsi qu'à moi. Que nous ont servi tous nos conseils?

Et une autre reprit : La foi et la pensée ont brisé les chaînes des peuples ; la foi et la pensée ont affranchi la terre.

Et une autre dit : Nous voulions diviser les hommes, et notre oppression les a unis contre nous.

Et une autre: Nous avons versé le sang, et ce sang est retombé sur nos tètes.

Et une autre: Nous avons semé la corruption, et elle a germé en nous, et elle a dévoré nos os.

Et une autre: Nous avons cru étouffer la Liberté, et son souffle a desséché notre pouvoir jusqu'en sa racine.

Alors la septième ombre:

Le Christ a vaincu: maudit soit-il!

Et tous d'une seule voix répondirent :

Le Christ a vaincu: maudit soit-il!

Et je vis une main qui s'avançait; elle trempa le

doigt dans l'eau noirâtre dont les gouttes mesurent, en tombant, la durée éternelle, en marqua au front les sept ombres, et ce fut pour jamais.

Vous n'avez qu'un jour à passer sur la terre; faites en sorte de le passer en paix.

La paix est le fruit de l'amour; car, pour vivre en paix, il faut savoir supporter bien des choses.

Nul n'est parfait, tous ont leurs défauts; chaque homme pèse sur les autres, et l'amour seul rend ce poids léger.

Si vous ne pouvez supporter vos frères, comment vos frères vous supporteront-ils?

Il est écrit du fils de Marie: Comme il avait aimé les siens qui étaient dans le monde, il les aima jusqu'à la fin.

Aimez donc vos frères qui sont dans le monde, et aimez-les jusqu'à la fin.

L'amour est infatigable, il ne se lasse jamais. L'amour est inépuisable, il vit et renaît de lui-mème; et plus il s'épanche, plus il surabonde.

Qui s'aime plus que son frère n'est pas digne du Christ, mort pour ses frères. Avez-vous donné vos biens, donnez encore votre vie, et l'amour vous rendra tout.

Je vous le dis en vérité, celui qui aime, son cœur est un paradis sur la terre. Il a Dieu en soi, car Dieu est amour.

L'homme vicieux n'aime point, il convoite : il a faim et soif de tout; son œil, tel que l'œil du serpent, fascine et attire, mais pour dévorer.

L'amour repose au fond des âmes pures, comme une goutte de rosée dans le calice d'une fleur.

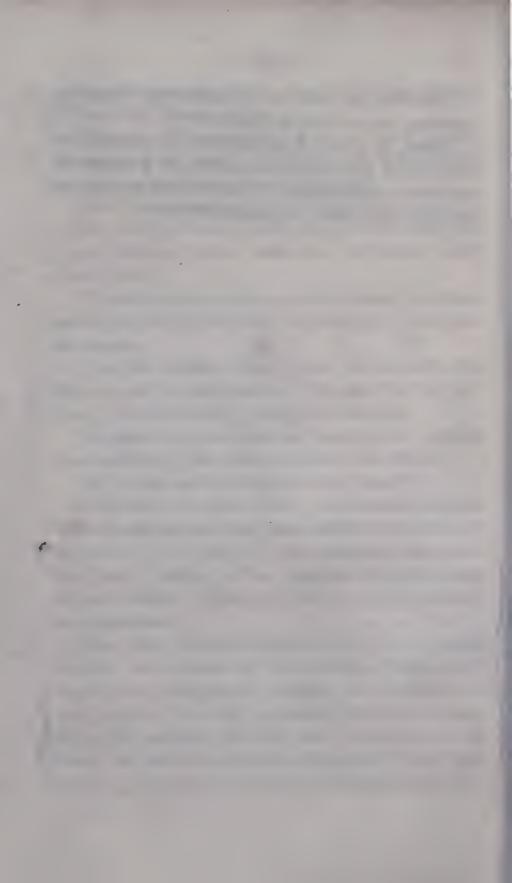
Oh! si vous saviez ce que c'est qu'aimer!

Vous dites que vous aimez, et beaucoup de vos frères manquent de pain pour soutenir leur vie, de vêtements pour couvrir leurs membres nus, d'un toit pour s'abriter, d'une poignée de paille pour dormir dessus, tandis que vous avez toutes choses en abondance.

Vous dites que vous aimez, et il y a, en grand nombre, des malades qui languissent, privés de secours, sur leur pauvre couche; des malheureux qui pleurent sans que personne pleure avec eux; des petits enfants qui s'en vont, tout transis de froid, de porte en porte demander aux riches une miette de leur table, et qui ne l'obtiennent pas.

Vous dites que vous aimez vos frères : et que feriez-vous donc si vous les haïssiez?

Et moi, je vous le dis, quiconque, le pouvant, ne soulage pas son frère qui souffre, est l'ennemi de son frère; et quiconque, le pouvant, ne nourrit pas son frère qui a faim, est son meurtrier.



XVI.

Il se rencontre des hommes qui n'aiment point Dieu, et qui ne le craignent point: fuyez-les, car il sort d'eux une vapeur de malédiction.

Fuyez l'impie, car son haleine tue; mais ne le haïssez pas, car qui sait si déjà Dieu n'a pas changé son cœur?

L'homme qui, même de bonne foi, dit: Je ne crois point, se trompe souvent. Il y a bien avant dans l'âme, jusqu'au fond, une racine de foi qui ne sèche point.

La parole qui nie Dieu brûle les lèvres sur les-

quelles elle passe, et la bouche qui s'ouvre pour blasphémer est un soupirail de l'enfer.

L'impie est seul dans l'univers. Toutes les créatures louent Dieu, tout ce qui sent le bénit, tout ce qui pense l'adore; l'astre du jour et ceux de la nuit le chantent dans leur langue mystérieuse.

Il a écrit au firmament son nom trois fois saint.

Gloire à Dieu dans les hauteurs des cieux!

Il l'a écrit aussi dans le cœur de l'homme, et l'homme bon l'y conserve avec amour; mais d'autres tâchent de l'effacer.

Paix sur la terre aux hommes dont la volonté est bonne!

Leur sommeil est doux; et leur mort est encore plus douce, car ils savent qu'ils retournent vers leur père.

Comme le pauvre laboureur, au déclin du jour, quitte les champs, regagne sa chaumière, et, assis devant la porte, oublie ses fatigues en regardant le ciel; ainsi, quand le soir se fait, l'homme d'espérance regagne avec joie la maison paternelle, et, assis sur le seuil, oublie les travaux de l'exil dans les visions de l'éternité.

XVII.

Deux hommes étaient voisins, et chacun d'eux avait une femme et plusieurs petits enfants, et son seul travail pour les faire vivre.

Et l'un de ces deux hommes s'inquiétait en luimème, disant: Si je meurs, ou que je tombe malade, que deviendront ma femme et mes enfants?

Et cette pensée ne le quittait point, et elle rongeait son cœur comme un ver ronge le fruit où il est caché.

Or, bien que la même pensée fût venue également à l'autre père, il ne s'y était point arrêté; car, disaitil, Dieu, qui connaît toutes ses créatures et qui veille sur elles, veillera aussi sur moi, et sur ma femme, et sur mes enfants.

Et celui-ci vivait tranquille, tandis que le premier ne goûtait pas un instant de repos ni de joie intérieurement.

Un jour qu'il travaillait aux champs, triste et abattu à cause de sa crainte, il vit quelques oiseaux entrer dans un buisson, en sortir, et puis bientôt y revenir encore.

Et, s'étant approché, il vit deux nids posés côte à côte, et dans chacun plusieurs petits nouvellement éclos et encore sans plumes.

Et, quand il fut retourné à son travail, de temps en temps il levait les yeux, et regardait ces oiseaux, qui allaient et venaient portant la nourriture à leurs petits.

Or, voilà qu'au moment où l'une des mères rentrait avec sa becquée, un vautour la saisit, l'enlève; et la pauvre mère, se débattant vainement sous sa serre, jetait des cris perçants.

A cette vue, l'homme qui travaillait sentit son âme plus troublée qu'auparavant : car, pensait-il, la mort de la mère, c'est la mort des enfants. Les miens n'ont que moi non plus. Que deviendront-ils si je leur manque?

Et tout le jour il fut sombre et triste, et la nuit il ne dormit point.

Le lendemain, de retour aux champs, il se dit : Je veux voir les petits de cette pauvre mère : plusieurs sans doute ont déjà péri. Et il s'achemina vers le buisson. Et, regardant, il vit les petits bien portants; pas un ne semblait avoir pâti.

Et, ceci l'ayant étonné, il se cacha pour observer

ce qui se passerait.

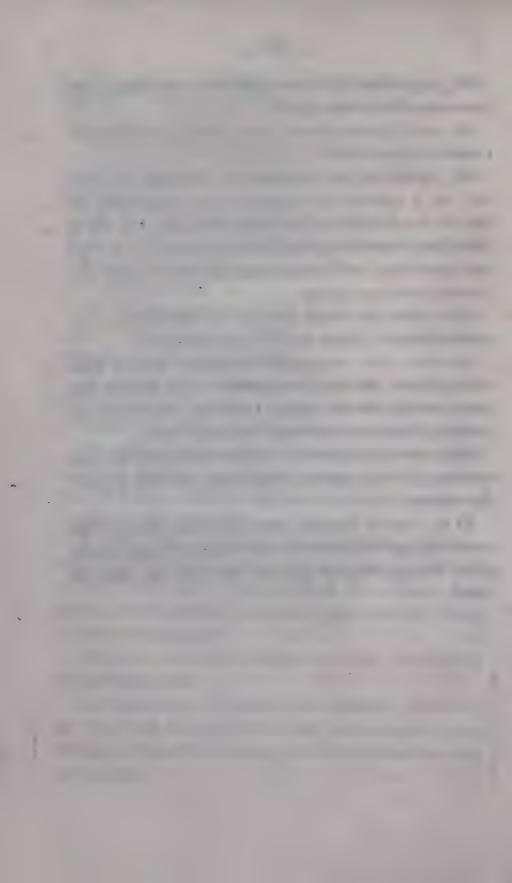
Et, après un peu de temps, il entendit un léger cri, et il aperçut la seconde mère rapportant en hâte la nourriture qu'elle avait recueillie, et elle la distribua à tous les petits indistinctement, et il y en eut pour tous, et les orphelins ne furent point délaissés dans leur misère.

Et le père qui s'était défié de la Providence, raconta le soir à l'autre père ce qu'il avait vu.

Et celui-ci dit: Pourquoi s'inquiéter? Jamais Dieu n'abandonne les siens. Son amour a des secrets que nous ne connaissons point. Croyons, espérons, aimons, et poursuivons notre route en paix.

Si je meurs avant vous, vons serez le père de mes enfants; si vous mourez avant moi, je serai le père des vôtres.

Et si, l'un et l'autre, nous mourons avant qu'ils soient en âge de pourvoir eux-mêmes à leurs nécessités, ils auront pour père le Père qui est dans les cieux.



XVIII.

Quand vous avez prié, ne sentez-vous pas votre cœur plus léger, et votre âme plus contente?

La prière rend l'affliction moins douloureuse, et la joie plus pure : elle mèle à l'une je ne sais quoi de fortifiant et de doux, et à l'autre un parfum céleste.

Que faites-vous sur la terre, et n'avez-vous rien à demander à celui qui vous y a mis?

Vous êtes un voyageur qui cherche la patrie. Ne marchez point la tête baissée : il faut lever les yeux pour reconnaître sa route. Votre patrie, c'est le ciel; et, quand vous regardez le ciel, est-ce qu'en vous il ne se remue rien? estce que nul désir ne vous presse? ou ce désir est-il muet?

Il en est qui disent : A quoi bon prier? Dieu est trop au-dessus de nous pour écouter de si chétives créatures.

Et qui donc a fait ces créatures chétives; qui leur a donné le sentiment, et la pensée, et la parole, si ce n'est Dieu?

Et, s'il a été si bon envers elles, était-ce pour les délaisser ensuite et les repousser loin de lui?

En vérité, je vous le dis, quiconque dit, dans son cœur, que Dieu méprise ses œuvres, blasphème Dieu.

Il en est d'autres qui disent : A quoi bon prier? Dieu ne sait-il pas mieux que nous ce dont nous avons besoin?

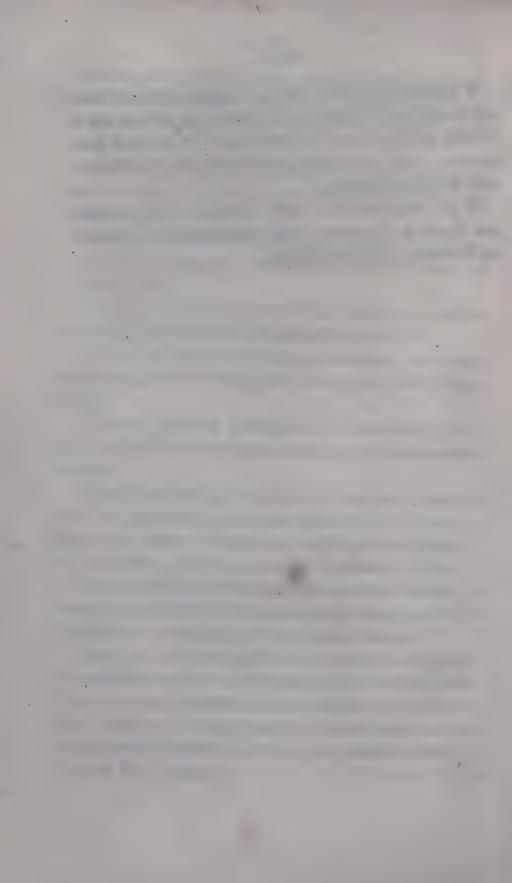
Dieu sait mieux que vous ce dont vous avez besoin, et c'est pour cela, qu'il veut que vous le lui demandiez : car Dieu est lui-même votre premier besoin; et prier Dieu, c'est commencer à posséder Dieu.

Le père connaît les besoins de son fils ; faut-il , à cause de cela que le fils n'ait jamais une parole de demande et d'action de grâces pour son père?

Quand les animaux souffrent, quand ils craignent, ou quand ils ont faim, ils poussent des cris plaintifs. Ces cris sont la prière qu'ils adressent à Dieu, et Dieu l'écoute. L'homme serait-il donc dans la création le seul être dont la voix ne dût jamais monter à l'oreille du Créateur?

Il passe quelquefois sur les campagnes un vent qui dessèche les plantes, et alors on voit leurs tiges flétries pencher vers la terre; mais, humectées par la rosée, elles reprennent leur fraîcheur, et relèvent leur tête languissante.

Il y a toujours des vents brûlants qui passent sur l'âme de l'homme, et la dessèchent. La prière est la rosée qui la rafraîchit.



XIX.

Vous n'avez qu'un père, qui est Dieu, et qu'un maître, qui est le Christ.

Quand donc on vous dira de ceux qui possèdent sur la terre une grande puissance: Voilà vos maîtres, ne le croyez point. S'ils sont justes, ce sont vos serviteurs; s'ils ne le sont pas, ce sont vos tyrans.

Tous naissent égaux : nul, en venant au monde, n'apporte avec lui le droit de commander.

J'ai vu dans un berceau un enfant criant et bavant, et autour de lui étaient des vieillards qui lui disaient : Seigneur, et qui, s'agenouillant, l'adoraient. Et j'ai compris toute la misère de l'homme.

C'est le péché qui a fait les princes; parce qu'au lieu de s'aimer et de s'aider comme des frères, les hommes ont commencé à se nuire les uns aux autres.

Alors parmi eux ils en choisirent un ou plusieurs, qu'ils croyaient les plus justes, afin de protéger les bons contre les méchants, et que le faible pût vivre en paix.

Et le pouvoir qu'ils exerçaient était un pouvoir légitime, car c'était le pouvoir de Dieu qui veut que la justice règne, et le pouvoir du peuple qui les avait élus.

Et c'est pourquoi chacun était tenu en conscience de leur obéir.

Mais il s'en trouva aussi bientôt qui voulurent régner par eux-mèmes, comme s'ils eussent été d'une nature plus élevée que celle de leurs frères.

Et le pouvoir de ceux-ci n'est pas légitime, car c'est le pouvoir de Satan, et leur domination est celle de l'orgueil et de la convoitise.

Et c'est pourquoi, lorsqu'on n'a pas à craindre qu'il en résulte plus de mal, chacun peut et quelquefois doit en conscience leur résister.

Dans la balance du droit éternel, votre volonté pèse plus que la volonté des rois : car ce sont les peuples qui font les rois, et les rois sont faits pour les peuples, et les peuples ne sont pas faits pour les rois.

Le père céleste n'a point formé les membres de

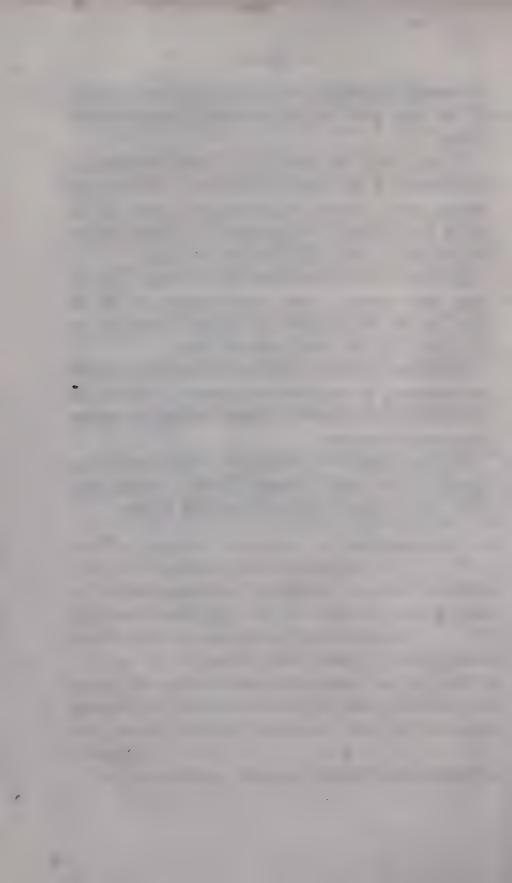
ses enfants pour qu'ils fussent brisés par des fers, ni leur âme pour qu'elle fût meurtrie par la servitude.

Il les a unis en familles, et toutes les familles sont sœurs; il les a unis en nations, et toutes les nations sont sœurs: et quiconque sépare les familles des familles, les nations des nations, divise ce que Dieu a uni; il fait l'œuvre de Satan.

Et ce qui unit les familles aux familles, les nations aux nations, c'est premièrement la loi de Dieu, la loi de justice et de charité, ensuite la loi de liberté, qui est aussi la loi de Dieu.

Car, sans la liberté, quelle union existerait-il entre les hommes? Ils seraient unis comme le cheval est uni à celui qui le monte, comme le fouet du maître à la peau de l'esclave.

Si donc quelqu'un vient et dit: Vous êtes à moi; répondez: Non; nous sommes à Dieu, qui est notre père, et au Christ, qui est notre seul maître.



XX.

Ne vous laissez pas tromper par de vaines paroles. Plusieurs chercheront à vous persuader que vous êtes vraiment libres, parce qu'ils auront écrit sur une feuille de papier le mot de *liberté*, et l'auront affiché à tous les carrefours.

La liberté n'est pas un placard qu'on lit au coin de la rue. Elle est une puissance vivante qu'on sent en soi, et autour de soi; le génie protecteur du foyer domestique, la garantie des droits sociaux, et le premier de ces droits.

L'oppresseur qui se couvre de son nom est le pire

des oppresseurs. Il joint le mensonge à la tyrannie, et à l'injustice la profanation; car le nom de la Liberté est saint.

Gardez-vous donc de ceux qui disent : Liberté, liberté, et qui la détruisent par leurs œuvres.

Est-ce vous qui choisissez ceux qui vous gouvernent, qui vous commandent de faire ceci et de ne pas faire cela, qui imposent vos biens, votre industrie, votre travail? Et, si ce n'est pas vous, comment êtes-vous libres?

Pouvez-vous disposer de vos enfants comme vous l'entendez, confier à qui vous plaît le soin de les instruire et de former leurs mœurs? Et, si vous ne le pouvez pas, comment êtes-vous libres?

Les oiseaux du ciel et les insectes mèmes s'assemblent pour faire en commun ce qu'aucun d'eux ne pourrait faire seul. Pouvez-vous vous assembler pour traiter ensemble de vos intérèts, pour défendre vos droits, pour obtenir quelque soulagement à vos maux? Et, si vous ne le pouvez pas, comment ètes-vous libres?

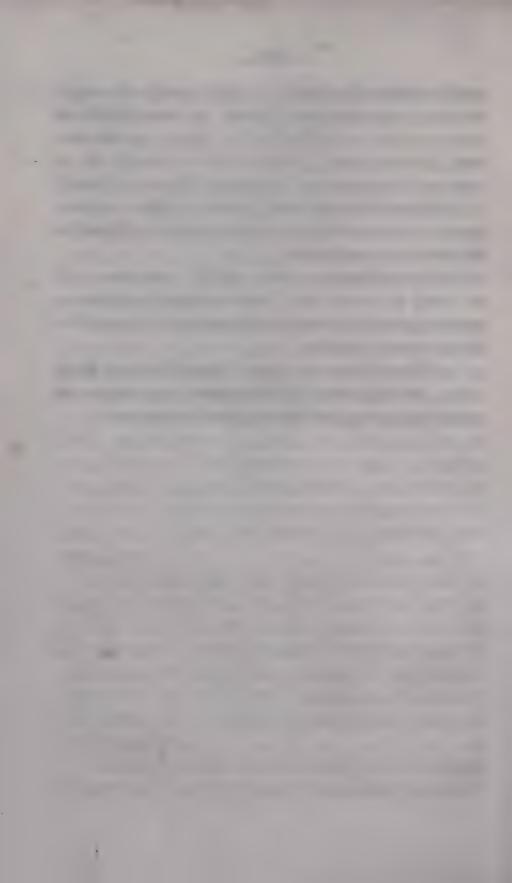
Pouvez-vous aller d'un lieu à un autre si on ne vous le permet, user des fruits de la terre et des productions de votre travail, tremper votre doigt dans l'eau de la mer et en laisser tomber une goutte dans le pauvre vase de terre où cuisent vos aliments, sans vous exposer à payer l'amende et à être traînés en prison? Et, si vous ne le pouvez pas, comment êtes-vous libres?

Pouvez-vous, en vous couchant le soir, vous répondre qu'on ne viendra point, durant votre sommeil, fouiller les lieux les plus secrets de votre maison, vous arracher du sein de votre famille et vous jeter au fond d'un cachot, parce que le pouvoir, dans sa peur, se sera défié de vous? Et, si vous ne le pouvez pas, comment êtes-vous libres?

La liberté luira sur vous, quand, à force de courage et de persévérance, vous vous serez affranchis de toutes ces servitudes.

La liberté luira sur vous, quand vous aurez dit au fond de votre âme: Nous voulons ètre libres; quand, pour le devenir, vous serez prèts à sacrifier tout et à tout souffrir.

La liberté luira sur vous, lorsqu'au pied de la croix, sur laquelle le Christ mourut pour vous, vous aurez juré de mourir les uns pour les autres.



XXI.

Le peuple est incapable d'entendre ses intérêts; on doit, pour son bien, le tenir toujours en tutelle. N'est-ce pas à ceux qui ont des lumières de conduire ceux qui manquent de lumières?

Ainsi parlent une foule d'hypocrites qui veulent faire les affaires du peuple, afin de s'engraisser de

la substance du peuple.

Vous êtes incapables, disent-ils, d'entendre vos intérêts: et, sur cela, ils ne vous permettront pas même de disposer de ce qui est à vous pour un objet que vous jugerez utile; et ils en disposeront, contre

votre gré, pour un autre objet qui vous déplaît et vous répugne.

Vous êtes incapables d'administrer une petite propriété commune, incapables de savoir ce qui vous est bon ou mauvais, de connaître vos besoins, et d'y pourvoir : et, sur cela, on vous enverra des hommes bien payés, à vos dépens, qui géreront vos biens à leur fantaisie, vous empêcheront de faire ce que vous voudrez, et vous forceront de faire ce que vous ne voudrez pas.

Vous êtes incapables de discerner quelle éducation il est convenable de donner à vos enfants : et, par tendresse pour vos enfants, on les jettera dans des cloaques d'impiété et de mauvaises mœurs; à moins que vous n'aimiez mieux qu'ils demeurent privés de toute espèce d'instruction.

Vous êtes incapables de juger si vous pouvez, vous et votre famille, subsister avec le salaire qu'on vous accorde pour votre travail : et l'on vous défendra, sous des peines sévères, de vous concerter ensemble pour obtenir une augmentation de ce salaire, afin que vous puissiez vivre, vous, vos femmes et vos enfants.

Si ce que dit cette race hypocrite et avide était vrai, vous seriez bien au-dessous de la brute; car la brute sait tout ce qu'on affirme que vous ne savez pas, et elle n'a besoin que de l'instinct pour le savoir.

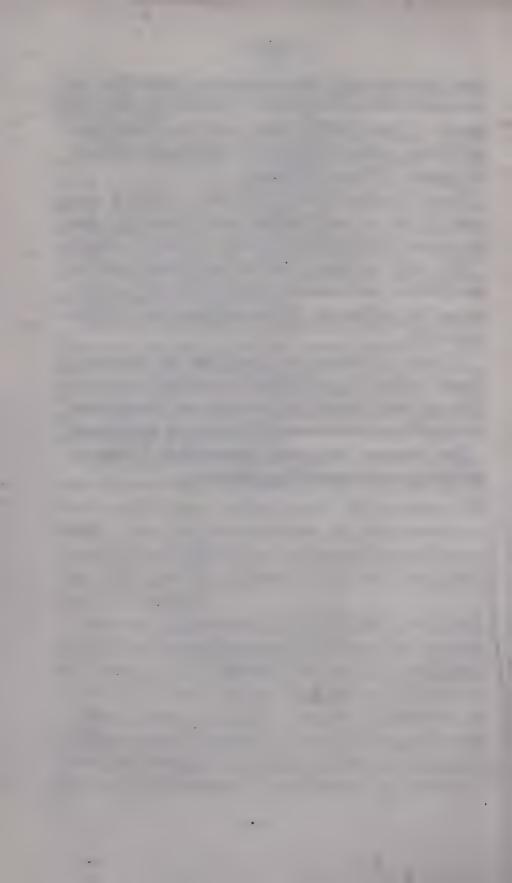
Dieu ne vous a pas faits pour être le troupeau de quelques autres hommes. Il vous a faits pour vivre librement en société comme des frères. Or, un frère n'a rien à commander à son frère. Les frères se lient entre eux par des conventions mutuelles, et ces conventions c'est la loi, et la loi doit être respectée, et tous doivent s'unir pour empêcher qu'on ne la viole, parce qu'elle est la sauvegarde de tous, la volonté et l'intérêt de tous.

Soyez hommes: nul n'est assez puissant pour vous atteler au joug malgré vous; mais vous pouvez passer la tête dans le collier, si vous le voulez.

Il y a des animaux stupides qu'on enferme dans des étables, qu'on nourrit pour le travail, et puis, lorsqu'ils vieillissent, qu'on engraisse pour manger leur chair.

Il y en a d'autres qui vivent dans les champs en liberté, qu'on ne peut plier à la servitude, qui ne se laissent point séduire par des caresses trompeuses, ni vaincre par des menaces et de mauvais traitements.

Les hommes courageux ressemblent à ceux-ci : les lâches sont comme les premiers.



XXII.

Comprenez bien comment on se rend libre.

Pour être libre, il faut, avant tout, aimer Dieu : car, si vous aimez Dieu, vous ferez sa volonté; et la volonté de Dieu est la justice et la charité, sans lesquelles point de liberté.

Lorsque, par violence ou par ruse, on prend ce qui est à autrui; lorsqu'on l'attaque dans sa personne; lorsqu'en chose licite on l'empêche d'agir comme il veut, ou qu'on le force d'agir comme il ne veut pas; lorsqu'on viole son droit d'une manière quelconque, qu'est-ce que cela? Une injustice. C'est donc l'injustice qui détruit la liberté. Si chacun n'aimait que soi et ne songeait qu'à soi, sans venir au secours des autres, le pauvre serait obligé souvent de dérober ce qui est à autrui, pour vivre et faire vivre les siens; le faible serait opprimé par un plus fort, et celui-ci par un autre encore plus fort; l'injustice régnerait partout. C'est donc la charité qui conserve la liberté.

Aimez Dieu plus que toutes choses, et le prochain comme vous-même, et la servitude disparaîtra de la terre.

Cependant ceux qui profitent de la servitude de leurs frères mettront tout en œuvre pour la prolonger. Ils emploieront pour cela le mensonge et la force.

Ils diront que la domination arbitraire de quelques-uns et l'esclavage de tous les autres est l'ordre établi de Dieu; et, pour conserver leur tyrannie, ils ne craindront point de blasphémer la Providence.

Répondez-leur que leur Dieu à eux est Satan, l'ennemi de la race humaine, et que le vôtre est celui qui a vaincu Satan.

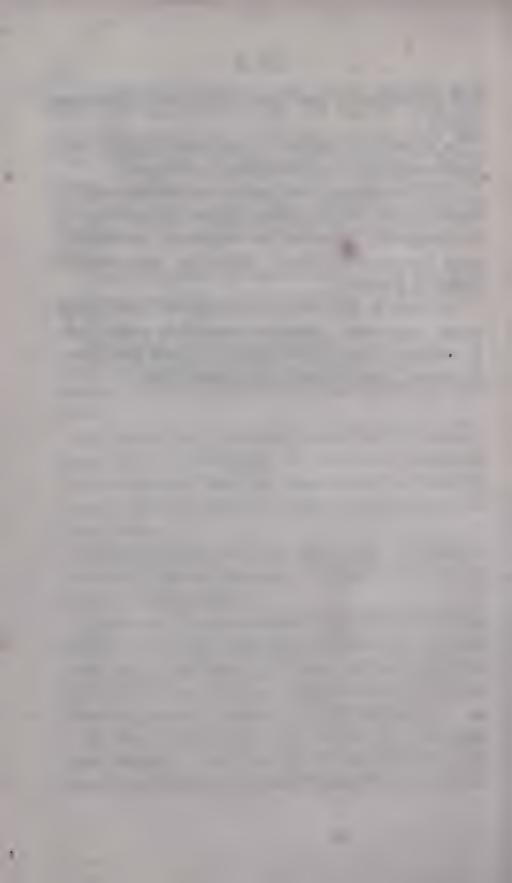
Après cela, ils déchaîneront contre vous leurs satellites; ils feront bâtir des prisons sans nombre pour vous y enfermer, ils vous poursuivront avec le fer et le feu, ils vous tourmenteront et répandront votre sang comme l'eau des fontaines.

Si donc vous n'ètes pas résolus à combattre sans relâche, à tout supporter sans fléchir, à ne jamais vous lasser, à ne céder jamais, gardez vos fers et renoncez à une liberté dont vous n'êtes pas dignes.

La liberté est comme le royaume de Dieu; elle souffre violence, et les violents la ravissent.

Et la violence qui vous mettra en possession de la liberté, n'est pas la violence féroce des voleurs et des brigands, l'injustice, la vengeance, la cruauté; mais une volonté forte, inflexible, un courage calme et généreux.

La cause la plus sainte se change en une cause impie, exécrable, quand on emploie le crime pour la soutenir. D'esclave l'homme de crime peut devenir tyran, mais jamais il ne devient libre.



XXIII.

Seigneur, nous crions vers vous du fond de notre misère.

Comme les animaux qui manquent de pâture pour donner à leurs petits,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme la brebis à qui on enlève son agneau,
Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme la colombe que saisit le vautour,
Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme la gazelle sous la griffe du tigre,
Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme le taureau épuisé de fatigue et ensanglanté par l'aiguillon,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme l'oiseau blessé que le chien poursuit,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme l'hirondelle tombée de lassitude en traversant les mers, et se débattant sur la vague,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme des voyageurs égarés dans un désert brûlant et sans eau,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme des naufragés sur une côte stérile,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme celui qui, à l'heure où la nuit se fait, rencontre près d'un cimetière un spectre hideux,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme le père à qui on ravit le morceau de pain qu'il portait à ses enfants affamés,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme le prisonnier que le puissant injuste a jeté dans un cachot humide et ténébreux,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur,

Comme l'esclave déchiré par le fouet du maître,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme l'innocent qu'on mène au supplice,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme le peuple d'Israël dans la terre de servitude,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme les descendants de Jacob, dont le roi d'Égypte faisait noyer dans le Nil les fils premiers-nés, Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur. Comme les douze tribus dont les oppresseurs augmentaient tous les jours les travaux, en retranchant chaque jour quelque chose de leur nourriture,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

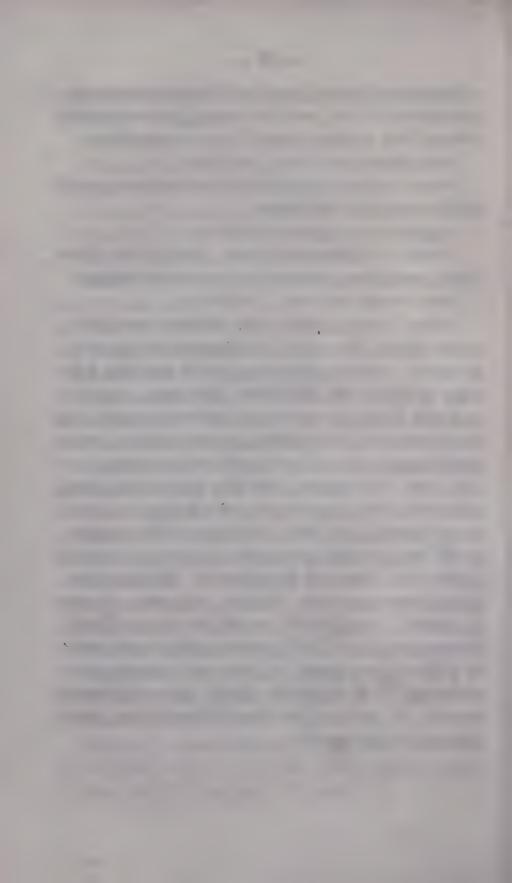
Comme toutes les nations de la terre avant qu'eût lui l'aurore de la délivrance,

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

Comme le Christ sur la croix, lorsqu'il dit: Mon Père, mon Père, pourquoi m'avez-vous délaissé?

Nous crions vers vous, Seigneur.

O Père! vous n'avez point délaissé votre Fils. votre Christ, si ce n'est en apparence et pour un moment; vous ne délaisserez point non plus à jamais les frères du Christ. Son divin sang, qui les a rachetés de l'esclavage du prince de ce monde, les rachètera aussi de l'esclavage des ministres du prince de ce monde. Voyez leurs pieds et leurs mains percés, leur côté ouvert, leur tête couverte de plaies sanglantes. Sous la terre que vous leur aviez donnée pour héritage, on leur a creusé un vaste sépulcre, et on les y a jetés pèle-mèle, et on en a scellé la pierre d'un sceau sur lequel on a, par moquerie, gravé votre saint nom. Et ainsi, Seigneur, ils sont là gisants; mais ils n'y seront pas éternellement. Encore trois jours, et le sceau sacrilége sera brisé, et la pierre sera brisée, et ceux qui dorment se réveilleront; et le règne du Christ, qui est justice et charité, et paix et joie dans l'Esprit saint, commencera. Ainsi soit-il!



XXIV.

Tout ce qui arrive dans le monde a son signe qui le précède.

Lorsque le soleil est près de se lever, l'horizon se colore de mille nuances, et l'orient paraît tout en feu.

Lorsque la tempête vient, on entend sur le rivage un sourd bruissement, et les flots s'agitent comme d'eux-mêmes.

Les innombrables pensées diverses qui se croisent et se mèlent à l'horizon du monde spirituel, sont le signe qui annonce le lever du soleil des intelligences. Le murmure confus et le mouvement intérieur des peuples en émoi sont le signe précurseur de la tempète qui passera bientôt sur les nations tremblantes.

Tenez-vous prèts, car les temps approchent.

En ce jour-là il y aura de grandes terreurs, et des cris tels qu'on n'en a point entendu depuis les jours du déluge.

Les rois hurleront sur leurs trônes; ils chercheront à retenir avec les deux mains leurs couronnes emportées par les vents, et ils seront balayés avec elles.

Les riches et les puissants sortiront nus de leurs palais, de peur d'être ensevelis sous les ruines.

On les verra, errants sur les chemins, demander aux passants quelques haillons pour couvrir leur nudité, un peu de pain noir pour apaiser leur faim, et je ne sais s'ils l'obtiendront.

Et il y aura des hommes qui seront saisis de la soif du sang, et qui adoreront la mort, et qui voudront la faire adorer.

Et la mort étendra sa main de squelette comme pour les bénir, et cette bénédiction descendra sur leur cœur, et il cessera de battre.

Et les savants se troubleront dans leur science, et elle leur apparaîtra comme un petit point noir, quand se lèvera le soleil des intelligences.

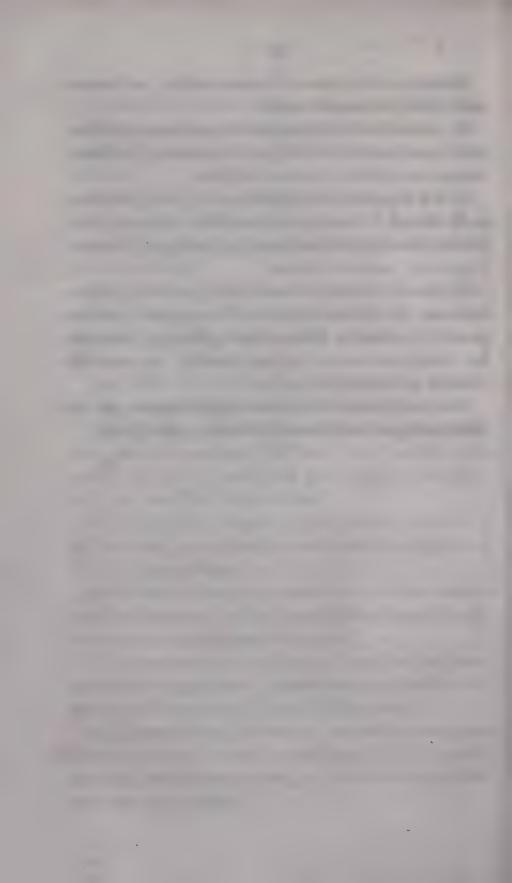
Et, à mesure qu'il montera, sa chaleur fondra les nuages amoncelés par la tempète; et ils ne seront plus qu'une légère vapeur, qu'un vent doux chassera vers le couchant. Jamais le ciel n'aura été aussi serein, ni la terre aussi verte et aussi féconde.

Et, au lieu du faible crépuscule que nous appelons jour, une lumière vive et pure rayonnera d'en haut comme un reflet de la face de Dieu.

Et les hommes se regarderont à cette lumière, et ils diront : Nous ne connaissions ni nous ni les autres; nous ne savions pas ce que c'est que l'homme. A présent, nous le savons.

Et chacun s'aimera dans son frère, et se tiendra heureux de le servir; et il n'y aura ni petits ni grands, à cause de l'amour qui égale tout, et toutes les familles ne seront qu'une famille, et toutes les nations qu'une nation.

Ceci est le sens des lettres mystérieuses que les Juifs aveugles attachèrent à la croix du Christ.



XXV.

C'était une nuit d'hiver. Le vent soufflait au dehors, et la neige blanchissait les toits.

Sous un de ces toits, dans une chambre étroite, étaient assises, travaillant de leurs mains, une

femme à cheveux blancs et une jeune fille.

Et, de temps en temps, la vieille femme réchauffait à un petit brasier ses mains pâles. Une lampe d'argile éclairait cette pauvre demeure; et un rayon de la lampe venait expirer sur une image de la Vierge, suspendue au mur.

Et la jeune fille, levant les yeux, regarda en si-

lence, pendant quelques moments, la femme à cheveux blancs; puis elle lui dit : Ma mère, vous n'avez pas été toujours dans ce dénuement...

Et il y avait dans sa voix une douceur et une ten-

dresse inexprimables.

Et la femme à cheveux blancs répondit: Ma fille, Dieu est le maître : ce qu'il fait est bien fait.

Ayant dit ces mots, elle se tut un peu de temps; ensuite elle reprit:

Quand je perdis votre père, ce fut une douleur que je crus sans consolation : cependant, vous me restiez; mais je ne sentais qu'une chose alors.

Depuis, j'ai pensé que, s'il vivait, et qu'il nous vît en c'ette détresse, son âme se briserait; et j'ai reconnu que Dieu avait été bon envers lui.

La jeune fille ne répondit rien, mais elle baissa la tète; et quelques larmes, qu'elle s'efforçait de cacher, tombèrent sur la toile qu'elle tenait entre ses mains.

La mère ajouta: Dieu, qui a été bon envers lui, a été bon aussi envers nous. De quoi avons-nous manqué, tandis que tant d'autres manquent de tout?

Il est vrai qu'il a fallu nous habituer à peu, et, ce peu, le gagner par notre travail; mais ce peu ne suffit-il pas? et tous n'ont-ils pas été, dès le commencement, condamnés à vivre de leur travail?

Dieu, dans sa bonté, nous a donné le pain de chaque jour ; et combien ne l'ont pas! un abri, et combien ne savent où se retirer! Il vous a, ma fille, donnée à moi : de quoi me plaindrais-je?

A ces dernières paroles, la jeune fille, tout émue, tomba aux genoux de sa mère, prit ses mains, les baisa et se pencha sur son sein en pleurant.

Et la mère, faisant un effort pour élever la voix: Ma fille, dit-elle, le bonheur n'est pas de posséder beaucoup, mais d'espérer et d'aimer beaucoup.

Notre espérance n'est pas ici-bas, ni notre amour non plus; ou, s'il y est, ce n'est qu'en passant.

Après Dieu, vous m'êtes tout en ce monde; mais ce monde s'évanouit comme un songe, et c'est pourquoi mon amour s'élève avec vous vers un autre monde.

Lorsque je vous portais dans mon sein, un jour je priai avec plus d'ardeur la Vierge Marie; et elle m'apparut pendant mon sommeil, et il me semblait qu'avec un sourire céleste elle me présentait un petit enfant.

Et je pris l'enfant qu'elle me présentait; et, lorsque je le tins dans mes bras, la vierge-mère posa sur sa tète une couronne de roses blanches:

Peu de mois après vous naquîtes, et la douce vision était toujours devant mes yeux.

Ce disant, la femme aux cheveux blancs tressaillit et serra sur son cœur la jeune fille.

A quelque temps de là une ame sainte vit deux formes lumineuses monter vers le ciel, et une troupe d'anges les accompagnait, et l'air retentissait de leurs chants d'allégresse.

XXVI.

Ce que vos yeux voient, ce que touchent vos mains, ce ne sont que des ombres, et le son qui frappe votre oreille n'est qu'un grossier écho de la voix intime et mystérieuse qui adore, et prie, et gémit au sein de la création.

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Car toute créature gémit, toute créature est dans le travail de l'enfantement, et s'efforce de naître à la vie véritable, de passer des ténèbres à la lumière, de la région des apparences à celle des réalités.

Ce soleil si brillant, si beau, n'est que le vêtement, l'emblème obscur du vrai soleil qui éclaire et échauffe les âmes. Cette terre si riche, si verdoyante, n'est que le pâle suaire de la nature : car la nature, déchue aussi, est descendue comme l'homme dans le tombeau; mais comme lui elle en sortira.

Sous cette enveloppe épaisse du corps, vous ressemblez à un voyageur qui, la nuit dans sa tente, voit ou croit voir des fantômes passer.

Le monde réel est voilé pour vous. Celui qui se retire au fond de lui-même, l'y entrevoit comme dans le lointain. De secrètes puissances, qui sommeillent en lui, se réveillent un moment, soulèvent un coin du voile que le temps retient de sa main ridée, et l'œil intérieur est ravi des merveilles qu'il contemple.

Vous êtes assis au bord de l'océan des êtres, mais vous ne pénétrez point dans ses profondeurs. Vous marchez le soir le long de la mer, et vous ne voyez qu'un peu d'écume que le flot jette sur le rivage.

A quoi vous comparerai-je encore?

Vous ètes comme l'enfant dans le sein de sa mère, attendant l'heure de sa naissance; comme l'insecte ailé dans le ver qui rampe, aspirant à sortir de cette prison terrestre pour prendre votre essor vers les cieux.

XXVII.

Qui est-ce qui se pressait autour du Christ pour

entendre sa parole? Le peuple.

Qui est-ce qui le suivait dans la montagne et les lieux déserts pour écouter ses enseignements? Le peuple.

Qui voulait le choisir pour roi? Le peuple.

Qui étendait ses vêtements et jetait devant lui des palmes en criant Hosannah, lors de son entrée à Jérusalem? Le peuple.

Qui est-ce qui se scandalisait à cause des malades qu'il guérissait le jour du sabbat? Les scribes et les pharisiens. Qui l'interrogeait insidieusement et lui tendait des piéges pour le perdre? Les scribes et les pharisiens.

Qui disait de lui : Il est possédé? Qui l'appelait un homme de bonne chère et aimant le plaisir? Les scribes et les pharisiens.

Qui le traitait de séditieux et de blasphémateur? qui se ligua pour le faire mourir? qui le crucifia sur le Calvaire entre deux voleurs?

Les scribes et les pharisiens, les docteurs de la loi, le roi Hérode et ses courtisans, le gouverneur romain et le prince des prètres.

Leur astuce hypocrite trompa le peuple même. Ils le poussèrent à demander la mort de celui qui l'avait nourri dans le désert avec sept pains, qui rendait aux infirmes la santé, la vue aux aveugles, l'ouïe aux sourds, et aux perclus l'usage de leurs membres.

Mais Jésus, voyant qu'on avait séduit ce peuple comme le Serpent séduisit la femme, pria son Père, disant: Mon Père, pardonnez-leur; car ils ne savent pas ce qu'ils font.

Et cependant, depuis dix-huit siècles, le Père ne leur a pas encore pardonné, et ils traînent leur supplice par toute la terre, et par toute la terre l'eşclave est contraint de se baisser pour les voir.

La miséricorde du Christ est sans exclusion. Il est venu dans ce monde pour sauver, non pas quelques hommes, mais tous les hommes; il a eu pour chacun d'eux une goutte de sang.

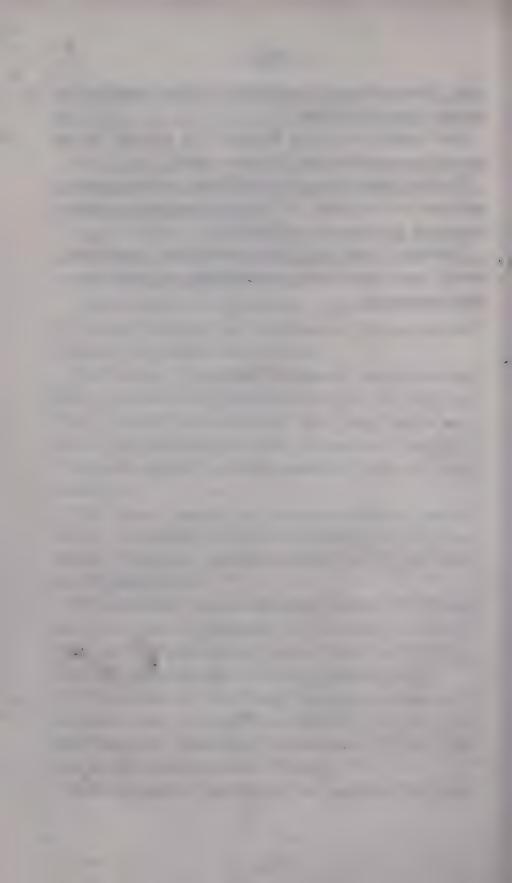
Mais les petits, les faibles, les humbles, les pau-

vres, tous ceux qui souffraient, il les aimait d'un amour de prédilection.

Son cœur battait sur le cœur du peuple, et le cœur du peuple battait sur son cœur.

Et c'est là, sur le cœur du Christ, que les peuples malades se raniment, et que les peuples opprimés reçoivent la force de s'affranchir.

Malheur à ceux qui s'éloignent de lui, qui le renient! leur misère est irrémédiable, et leur servitude éternelle.



XXVIII.

On a vu des temps où l'homme, en égorgeant l'homme dont les croyances différaient des siennes, se persuadait offrir un sacrifice agréable à Dieu.

Ayez en abomination ces meurtres exécrables.

Comment le meurtre de l'homme pourrait-il plaire à Dieu, qui a dit à l'homme : Tu ne tueras point?

Lorsque le sang de l'homme coule sur la terre comme une offrande à Dieu, les démons accourent pour le boire, et entrent dans celui qui l'a versé.

On ne commence à persécuter que quand on dés-

espère de convaincre; et qui désespère de convaincre, ou blasphème en lui-mème la puissance de la vérité, ou manque de confiance dans la vérité des doctrines qu'il annonce.

Quoi de plus insensé que de dire aux hommes : Croyez ou mourez!

La foi est fille du Verbe : elle pénètre dans les cœurs avec la parole, et non avec le poignard.

Jésus passa en faisant le bien, attirant à lui par sa bonté, et touchant par sa douceur les âmes les plus dures.

Ses lèvres divines bénissaient et ne maudissaient point, si ce n'est les hypocrites. Il ne choisit pas des bourreaux pour apôtres.

Il disait aux siens : Laissez croître ensemble, jusqu'à la moisson, le bon et le mauvais grain; le père de famille en fera la séparation sur l'aire.

Et à ceux qui le pressaient de faire descendre le feu du ciel sur une ville incrédule: Vous ne savez pas de quel esprit vous ètes.

L'esprit de Jésus est un esprit de paix, de miséricorde et d'amour.

Ceux qui persécutent en son nom, qui scrutent les consciences avec l'épée, qui torturent le corps pour convertir l'âme, qui font couler les pleurs au lieu de les essuyer; ceux-là n'ont pas l'esprit de Jésus.

Malheur à qui profane l'Évangile, en le rendant pour les hommes un objet de terreur! Malheur à qui écrit la bonne nouvelle sur une feuille sanglante! Ressouvenez-vous des catacombes.

En ce temps-là, on vous traînait à l'échafaud, on vous livrait aux bêtes féroces dans l'amphithéâtre pour amuser la populace, on vous jetait à milliers au fond des mines et dans les prisons, on confisquait vos biens, on vous foulait aux pieds comme la boue des places publiques; vous n'aviez, pour célébrer vos mystères proscrits, d'autre asile que les entrailles de la terre.

Que disaient vos persécuteurs? Ils disaient que vous propagiez des doctrines dangereuses; que votre secte, ainsi qu'ils l'appelaient, troublait l'ordre et la paix publique; que, violateurs des lois et ennemis du genre humain, vous ébranliez l'empire en ébranlant la religion de l'empire.

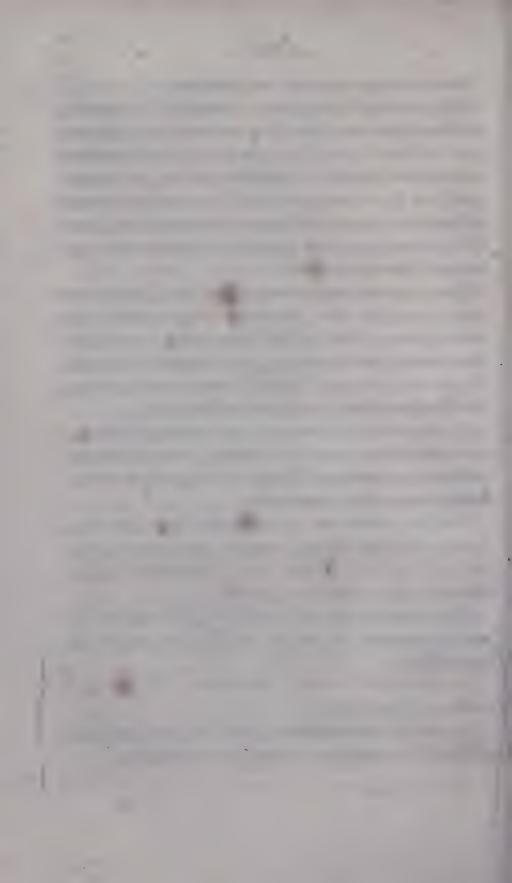
Et, dans cette détresse, sous cette oppression, que demandiez - vous? la liberté. Vous réclamiez le droit de n'obéir qu'à Dieu, de le servir et de l'adorer selon votre conscience.

Lorsque, même en se trompant dans leur foi, d'autres réclameront de vous ce droit sacré, respectez-le en eux, comme vous demandiez que les païens le respectassent en vous.

Respectez-le pour ne pas flétrir la mémoire de vos confesseurs, et ne pas souiller les cendres de vos martyrs.

La persécution a deux tranchants; elle blesse à droite et à gauche.

Si vous ne vous souvenez plus des enseignements du Christ, ressouvenez-vous des catacombes.



XXIX.

Gardez soigneusement en vos àmes la justice et la charité, elles seront votre sauvegarde; elles banniront d'au milieu de vous les discordes et les dissensions.

Ce qui produit les discordes et les dissensions, ce qui engendre les progrès qui scandalisent les gens de bien et ruinent les familles, c'est premièrement l'intérèt sordide, la passion insatiable d'acquérir et de posséder.

Combattez donc sans cesse en vous cette passion que Satan y excite sans cesse.

Qu'emporterez-vous de toutes les richesses que vous aurez amassées par de bonnes et de méchantes voies? Peu suffit à l'homme qui vit si peu de temps.

Une autre cause de dissensions interminables, ce

sont les mauvaises lois.

Or, il n'y a guère que de mauvaises lois dans le monde.

Quelle autre loi faut-il à celui qui a la loi du Christ?

La loi du Christ est claire, elle est sainte, et il n'est personne, s'il a cette loi dans le cœur, qui ne se juge lui-même aisément.

Écoutez ce qui m'a été dit:

Les enfants du Christ, s'ils ont entre eux quelques différends, ne doivent pas les porter devant les tribunaux de ceux qui oppriment la terre et qui la corrompent.

N'y a-t-il pas des vieillards parmi eux; et ces vieillards ne sont-ils pas leurs pères, connaissant la justice et l'aimant?

Qu'ils aillent donc trouver un de ces vieillards, et qu'ils lui disent: Mon père, nous n'avons pu nous accorder, moi et mon frère que voilà; nous vous en prions, jugez entre nous.

Et le vieillard écoutera les paroles de l'un et de l'autre, et il jugera entre eux, et, ayant jugé, il les

bénira.

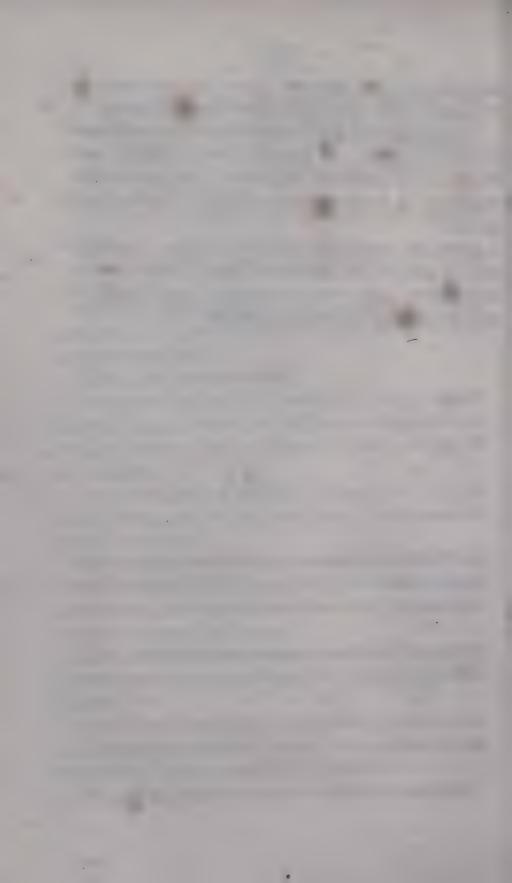
Et, s'ils se soumettent à ce jugement, la bénédiction demeurera sur eux : sinon, elle reviendra au vieillard qui aura jugé selon la justice.

Il n'est rien que ne puissent ceux qui sont unis,

soit pour le bien, soit pour le mal. Le jour donc où vous serez unis sera le jour de votre délivrance.

Lorsque les enfants d'Israël étaient opprimés dans la terre d'Égypte, si chacun d'eux, oubliant ses frères, avait voulu en sortir seul, pas un n'aurait échappé; ils sortirent tous ensemble, et nul ne les arrèta.

Vous êtes aussi dans la terre d'Égypte, courbés sous le sceptre de Pharaon et sous le fouet de ses exécuteurs: criez vers le Seigneur votre Dieu, et puis levez-vous et sortez ensemble.



XXX.

Quand la charité se fut refroidie et que l'injustice eut commencé à croître sur la terre, Dieu dit à un de ses serviteurs: Va de ma part trouver ce peuple, et annonce-lui ce que tu verras ; et ce que tu verras arrivera certainement, à moins que, quittant ses voies mauvaises, il ne se repente et ne revienne à moi.

Et le serviteur de Dieu obéit à son commandement; et s'étant revêtu d'un sac, et ayant répandu de la cendre sur sa tête, il s'en alla vers cette multitude, et, élevant la voix, il disait:

Pourquoi irritez-vous le Seigneur pour votre

perte? quittez vos voies mauvaises; repentez-vous et revenez à lui.

Et les uns, écoutant ces paroles, en étaient touchés; et les autres s'en moquaient, disant : Qui est celui-ci et que vient-il nous dire? Qui l'a chargé de nous reprendre? C'est un insensé.

Et voilà, l'Esprit de Dieu saisit le prophète, et le temps s'ouvrit à ses yeux, et les siècles passèrent devant lui.

Et, tout à coup déchirant ses vêtements: Ainsi, dit-il, sera déchirée la famille d'Adam.

Les hommes d'iniquité ont mesuré la terre au cordeau; ils en ont compté les habitants, comme on compte le bétail : tète à tête.

Ils ont dit: Partageons-nous cela, et faisons-en une monnaie à notre usage.

Et le partage s'est fait, et chacun a pris ce qui lui était échu, et la terre et ses habitants sont devenus la possession des hommes d'iniquité; et, se consultant tous ensemble, ils se sont demandé: Combien vaut notre possession? et tous ensemble ont répondu: Trente deniers.

Et ils ont commencé à trafiquer entre eux avec ces trente deniers.

Il y a eu des achats, des ventes, des trocs; des hommes pour de la terre, de la terre pour des hommes, et de l'or pour appoint.

Et chacun a convoité la part de l'autre, et ils se sont mis à s'entr'égorger pour se dépouiller mutuellement, et, avec le sang qui coulait. ils ont écrit sur un morceau de papier: Droit; et sur un autre: Gloire. Seigneur, assez! assez!

En voilà deux qui jettent leurs crocs de fer sur un peuple. Chacun en emporte son lambeau.

Le glaive a passé et repassé. Entendez-vous ces cris déchirants? ce sont les plaintes des jeunes

épouses, et les lamentations des mères.

Deux spectres se glissent dans l'ombre; ils parcourent les campagnes et les cités. L'un, décharné comme un squelette, ronge un débris d'animal immonde; l'autre a sous l'aisselle une pustule noire, et les chacals le suivent en hurlant.

Seigneur, Seigneur, votre courroux sera-t-il éternel? votre bras ne s'étendra-t-il jamais que pour frapper. Épargnez les pères à cause des enfants. Laissez-vous attendrir aux pleurs de ces pauvres petites créatures, qui ne savent pas encore distinguer leur main gauche de la droite.

Le monde s'élargit, la paix va renaître, il y aura place pour tous.

Malheur! malheur! le sang déborde; il entoure

la terre comme une ceinture rouge.

Quel est ce vieillard qui parle de justice en tenant d'une main une coupe empoisonnée, et caressant de l'autre une prostituée qui l'appelle : Mon père?

Il dit: C'est à moi qu'appartient la race d'Adam. Qui sont parmi vous les plus forts, et je la leur

distribuerai?

Et ce qu'il a dit, il le fait; et de son tròne, sans se lever, il assigne à chacun sa proie.

Et tous dévorent, dévorent ; et leur faim va crois-

sant, et ils se ruent les uns sur les autres, et la chair palpite, et les os craquent sous la dent.

Un marché s'ouvre, on y amène les nations la corde au cou; on les palpe, on les pèse, on les fait courir et marcher: elles valent tant. Ce ne sont plus le tumulte et la confusion d'auparavant, c'est un commerce régulier.

Heureux les oiseaux du ciel et les animaux de la terre! nul ne les contraint; ils vont et viennent comme il leur semble bon.

Qu'est-ce que ces meules qui tournent sans cesse, et que broient-elles?

Fils d'Adam, ces meules sont les lois de ceux qui vous gouvernent; et ce qu'elles broient, c'est vous.

Et, à mesure que le prophète jetait sur l'avenir ces lueurs sinistres, une frayeur mystérieuse s'emparait de ceux qui l'écoutaient.

Soudain sa voix cessa de se faire entendre, et il parut comme absorbé dans une pensée profonde. Le peuple attendait en silence, la poitrine serrée et palpitante d'angoisse.

Alors'le prophète: Seigneur, vous n'avez point abandonné ce peuple dans sa misère; vous ne l'avez pas livré pour jamais à ses oppresseurs.

Et il prit deux rameaux, et il en détacha les feuilles, et, les ayant croisés, il les lia ensemble, et il les éleva au-dessus de la multitude, disant : Ceci sera votre salut ; vous vaincrez par ce signe.

Et la nuit se fit, et le prophète disparut comme une ombre qui passe, et la multitude se dispersa de tous côtés dans les ténèbres.

XXXI.

Lorsqu'après une longue sécheresse, une pluie douce tombe sur la terre, elle boit avidement l'eau du ciel qui la rafraichit et la féconde.

Ainsi les nations altérées boiront avidement la parole de Dieu, lorsqu'elle descendra sur elles

comme une tiède ondée.

Et la justice avec l'amour, et la paix et la liberté, germeront dans leur sein.

Et ce sera comme au temps où tous étaient frères, et l'on n'entendra plus la voix du maître ni la voix de l'esclave, les gémissements du pauvre ni les soupirs des opprimés, mais des chants d'allégresse et de bénédiction.

Les pères diront à leurs fils : Nos premiers jours ont été troublés, pleins de larmes et d'angoisses. Maintenant le soleil se lève et se couche sur notre joie. Loué soit Dieu qui nous a montré ces biens avant de mourir!

Et les mères diront à leurs filles: Voyez nos fronts, à présent si calmes; le chagrin, la douleur, l'inquiétude y creusèrent jadis de profonds sillons. Les vôtres sont comme, au printemps, la surface d'un lac qu'aucune brise n'agite. Loué soit Dieu qui nous a montré ces biens avant de mourir!

Et les jeunes hommes diront aux jeunes vierges: Vous êtes belles comme les fleurs des champs, pures comme la rosée qui les rafraîchit, comme la lumière qui les colore. Il nous est doux de voir nos pères, il nous est doux d'être auprès de nos mères; mais, quand nous vous voyons et que nous sommes près de vous, il se passe en nos âmes quelque chose qui n'a de nom qu'au ciel. Loué soit Dieu qui nous a montré ces biens avant de mourir!

Et les jeunes vierges répondront: Les fleurs se fanent, elles passent; vient un jour où ni la rosée ne les rafraîchit, ni la lumière ne les colore plus. Il n'y a sur la terre que la vertu qui jamais ne se fane ni ne passe. Nos pères sont comme l'épi qui se remplit de grain vers l'automne, et nos mères comme la vigne qui se charge de fruits. Il nous est doux de voir nos pères, il nous est doux d'ètre auprès de nos mères; et les fils de nos pères et de nos mères nous sont doux aussi. Loué soit Dieu qui nous a montré ces biens avant de mourir!

XXXII.

Je voyais un hêtre monter à une prodigieuse hauteur. Du sommet presque jusqu'au bas, il étalait d'énormes branches, qui couvraient la terre à l'entour, de sorte qu'elle était nue; il n'y venait pas un seul brin d'herbe. Du pied du géant partait un chène qui, après s'être élevé de quelques pieds, se courbait, se tordait, puis s'étendait horizontalement, puis se relevait encore et se tordait de nouveau; et enfin on l'apercevait allongeant sa tête maigre et dépouillée sous les branches vigoureuses du hêtre, pour chercher un peu d'air et un peu de lumière.

Et je pensai en moi-même : Voilà comme les petits croissent à l'ombre des grands.

Qui se rassemble autour des puissants du monde? qui approche d'eux? ce n'est pas le pauvre; on le chasse: sa vue souillerait leurs regards. On l'éloigne avec soin de leur présence et de leurs palais; on ne le laisse pas même traverser leurs jardins ouverts à tous, hormis à lui, parce que son corps usé de travail est recouvert des vêtements de l'indigence.

Qui donc se rassemble autour des puissants du monde? les riches et les flatteurs qui veulent le devenir, les femmes perdues, les ministres infâmes de leurs plaisirs secrets, les baladins, les fous qui distraient leur conscience, et les faux prophètes qui la trompent.

Qui encore? les hommes de violence et de ruse, les agents d'oppression, les durs exacteurs, tous ceux qui disent: Livrez-nous le peuple, et nous ferons couler son or dans vos coffres, et sa graisse dans vos veines.

Là où git le corps, les aigles s'assembleront.

Les petits oiseaux font leur nid dans l'herbe, et les oiseaux de proie sur les arbres élevés.

XXXIII.

Au temps où les feuilles jaunissent, un vieillard, chargé d'un faix de ramée, revenait lentement vers sa chaumière, située sur la pente d'un vallon.

Et, du côté où s'ouvrait le vallon, entre quelques arbres jetés çà et là, on voyait les rayons obliques du soleil, déjà descendu sous l'horizon, se jouer dans les nuages du couchant et les teindre de couleurs innombrables, qui peu à peu allaient s'effaçant.

Et le vieillard, arrivé à sa chaumière, son seul bien avec le petit champ qu'il cultivait auprès, laissa tomber le faix de ramée, s'assit sur un siége de bois noirci par la fumée de l'âtre, et baissa la tête sur sa poitrine dans une profonde rèverie.

Et, de fois à autre, sa poitrine gonflée laissait échapper un court sanglot, et, d'une voix cassée, il disait:

Je n'avais qu'un fils, ils me l'ont pris; qu'une pauvre vache, ils me l'ont prise pour l'impôt de mon champ.

Et puis, d'une voix plus faible, il répétait : Mon fils, mon fils! et une larme venait mouiller ses vieil-les paupières, mais elle ne pouvait couler.

Comme il était ainsi s'attristant, il entendit quelqu'un qui disait : Mon père, que la bénédiction de Dieu soit avec vous et sur les vôtres!

Les miens? dit le vieillard; je n'ai plus personne qui tienne à moi, je suis seul.

Et, levant les yeux, il vit un pèlerin debout à la porte, appuyé sur un long bâton; et, sachant que c'est Dieu qui envoie les hôtes, il lui dit:

Que Dieu vous rende votre bénédiction. Entrez, mon fils; tout ce qu'a le pauvre est au pauvre.

Et, allumant sur le foyer son faix de ramée, il se mit à préparer le repas du voyageur.

Mais rien ne pouvait le distraire de la pensée qui l'oppressait : elle était là toujours, sur son cœur.

Et le pèlerin, ayant connu ce qui le troublait si amèrement, lui dit : Mon père, Dieu vous éprouve par la main des hommes. Cependant il y a des misères plus grandes que votre misère. Ce n'est pas l'opprimé qui souffre le plus, ce sont les oppresseurs.

Le vieillard secoua la tête et ne répondit point.

Le pèlerin reprit : Ce que maintenant vous ne croyez pas, vous le croirez bientôt.

Et, l'ayant fait asseoir, il posa les mains sur ses yeux; et le vieillard tomba dans un sommeil semblable au sommeil pesant, ténébreux, plein d'horreur, qui saisit Abraham quand Dieu lui montra les malheurs futurs de sa race.

Et il lui sembla ètre transporté dans un vaste palais, près d'un lit, et à côté du lit était une couronne, et dans ce lit un homme qui dormait; et ce qui se passait dans cet homme, le vieillard le voyait ainsi que, le jour, durant la veille, on voit ce qui se passe sous lès yeux.

Et l'homme qui était là, couché sur un lit d'or, entendait comme les cris confus d'une multitude qui demande du pain. C'était un bruit pareil au bruit des flots qui brisent contre le rivage pendant la tempète. Et la tempète croissait, et le bruit croissait; et l'homme qui dormait voyait les flots monter de moment en moment, et battre déjà les murs du palais, et il faisait des efforts inouïs pour fuir, et il ne pouvait pas, et son angoisse était extrême.

Pendant qu'il le regardait avec frayeur, le vieillard fut soudain transporté dans un autre palais. Celui qui était couché là ressemblait plutôt à un cadavre qu'à un homme vivant.

Et, dans son sommeil, il voyait devant lui des tètes coupées; et, ouvrant la bouche, ces tètes disaient:

Nous nous étions dévoués pour toi, et voilà le prix que nous avons reçu. Dors, dors ; nous ne dormons pas, nous. Nous veillons l'heure de la vengeance : elle est proche.

Et le sang se figeait dans les veines de l'homme endormi. Et il se disait : Si au moins je pouvais laisser ma couronne à cet enfant! Et ses yeux hagards se tournaient vers un berceau sur lequel on avait posé un bandeau de reine.

Mais, lorsqu'il commençait à se calmer et à se consoler un peu dans cette pensée, un autre homme, semblable à lui par les traits, saisit l'enfant et l'écrasa contre la muraille.

Et le vieillard se sentit défaillir d'horreur.

Et il fut transporté au même instant en deux lieux divers; et, quoique séparés, ces lieux, pour lui, ne formaient qu'un lieu.

Et il vit deux hommes, qu'à l'âge près on aurait pu prendre pour le même homme : et il comprit qu'ils avaient été nourris dans le même sein.

Et leur sommeil était celui du condamné qui attend le supplice à son réveil. Des ombres enveloppées d'un linceul sanglant passaient devant eux, et chacune d'elles, en passant, les touchait, et leurs membres se retiraient et se contractaient, comme pour se dérober à cet attouchement de la mort.

Puis ils se regardaient l'un l'autre avec une espèce de sourire affreux, et leur œil s'enflammait, et leur main s'agitait convulsivement sur un manche de poignard.

Et le vieillard vit ensuite un homme blème et maigre. Les soupçons se glissaient en foule près de son lit, distillaient leur venin sur sa face, murmuraient à voix basse des paroles sinistres, et enfonçaient lentement leurs ongles dans son crâne mouillé d'une sueur froide. Et une forme humaine, pâle comme un suaire, s'approcha de lui, et, sans parler, lui montra du doigt une marque livide qu'elle avait autour du cou. Et, dans le lit où il gisait, les genoux de l'homme blème se choquèrent, et sa bouche s'entr'ouvrit de terreur, et ses yeux se dilatèrent horriblement.

Et le vieillard, transi d'effroi, fut transporté dans un palais plus grand.

Et celui qui dormait là ne respirait qu'avec une peine extrême. Un spectre noir était accroupi sur sa poitrine et le regardait en ricanant. Et il lui parlait à l'oreille, et ses paroles devenaient des visions dans l'âme de l'homme qu'il pressait et foulait de ses os pointus.

Et celui-ci se voyait entouré d'une innombrable multitude qui poussait des cris effrayants.

Tu nous as promis la liberté, et tu nous as donné l'esclavage.

Tu nous as promis de régner par les lois, et les lois ne sont que tes caprices.

Tu nous as promis d'épargner le pain de nos femmes et de nos enfants, et tu as doublé notre misère pour grossir tes trésors.

Tu nous as promis de la gloire, et tu nous as valu le mépris des peuples et leur juste haine.

Descends, descends, et va dormir avec les parjures et les tyrans.

Et il se sentait précipité, traîné par cette multi-

tude, et il s'accrochait à des sacs d'or, et les sacs crevaient, et l'or s'échappait et tombait à terre.

Et il lui semblait qu'il errait pauvre dans le monde, et qu'ayant soif il demandait à boire par charité, et qu'on lui présentait un verre plein de boue, et que tous le fuyaient, tous le maudissaient, parce qu'il était marqué au front du signe des traîtres.

Et le vieillard détourna de lui les yeux avec dégoût.

Et, dans deux autres palais, il vit deux autres hommes rèvant de supplices. Car, disaient-ils, où trouverons-nous quelque sûreté? Le sol est miné sous nos pieds; les nations nous abhorrent; les petits enfants mème, dans leurs prières, demandent à Dieu, soir et matin, que la terre soit délivrée de nous.

Et l'un condamnait à la prison dure, c'est-à-dire à toutes les tortures du corps et de l'àme et à la mort de la faim, des malheureux qu'il soupçonnait d'avoir prononce le mot de patrie; et l'autre, après avoir confisqué leurs biens, ordonnait de jeter au fond d'un cachot deux jeunes filles coupables d'avoir soigné leurs frères blessés dans un hôpital.

Et, comme ils se fatiguaient à ce travail de bourreau, des messagers leur arrivèrent.

Et l'un des messagers disait : Vos provinces du Midi ont brisé leurs chaînes, et, avec les tronçons, elles ont chassé vos gouverneurs et vos soldats.

Et l'autre : Vos aigles ont été déchirées sur les

bords du large fleuve : ses flots en emportent les débris.

Et les deux rois se tordaient sur leur couche.

Et le vieillard en vit un troisième. Il avait chassé Dieu de son cœur, et, dans son cœur, à la place de Dieu, était un ver qui le rongeait sans relâche; et, quand l'angoisse devenait plus vive, il balbutiait de sourds blasphèmes, et ses lèvres se couvraient d'une écume rougeâtre.

Et il lui semblait être dans une plaine immense, seul avec le ver qui ne le quittait point. Et cette plaine était un cimetière, le cimetière d'un peuple égorgé.

Et tout à coup voilà que la terre s'émeut; les tombes s'ouvrent, les morts se lèvent et s'avancent en foule : et il ne pouvait ni faire un mouvement, ni pousser un cri.

Et tous ces morts, hommes, femmes, enfants, le regardaient en silence: et après un peu de temps, dans le mème silence, ils prirent les pierres des tombes et les posèrent autour de lui.

Il en eut d'abord jusqu'aux genoux, puis jusqu'à la poitrine, puis jusqu'à la bouche, et il tendait avec effort les muscles de son cou pour respirer une fois de plus; et l'édifice montait toujours, et, lorsqu'il fut achevé, le faîte se perdait dans une nuée sombre.

Les forces du vieillard commençaient à l'abandonner; son âme regorgeait d'épouvante.

Et voilà qu'ayant traversé plusieurs salles désertes, dans une petite chambre, sur un lit qu'éclairait à peine une lampe pâle, il aperçoit un homme usé par les ans.

Autour du lit étaient sept peurs, quatre d'un côté, trois de l'autre.

Et l'une des peurs posa la main sur le cœur de l'homme âgé, et il tressaillit, et ses membres tremblèrent; et la main resta là tant qu'elle sentit un peu de chaleur.

Et, après celle-ci, une autre plus froide fit ce qu'avait fait la première, et toutes posèrent la main sur le cœur de l'homme âgé.

Et il se passa en lui des choses qu'on ne peut dévoiler.

Il voyait dans le lointain, vers le pôle, un fantôme horrible qui lui disait : Donne-toi à moi, et je te réchaufferai de mon haleine.

Et, de ses doigts glacés, l'homme de peur écrivait un pacte, je ne sais quel pacte, mais chaque mot en était comme un râle d'agonie.

Et ce fut la dernière vision. Et le vieillard, s'étant réveillé, rendit grâces à la Providence de la part qu'elle lui avait faite dans les douleurs de la vie.

Et le pèlerin lui dit: Espérez et priez; la prière obtient tout. Votre fils n'est pas perdu; vos yeux le reverront avant de se fermer. Attendez en paix les jours de Dieu.

Et le vieillard attendit en paix.

XXXIV.

Les maux qui affligent la terre ne viennent pas de Dieu, car Dieu est amour, et tout ce qu'il a fait est bon; ils viennent de Satan, que Dieu a maudit, et des hommes qui ont Satan pour père et pour maître.

Or, les fils de Satan sont nombreux dans le monde. A mesure qu'ils passent, Dieu écrit leurs noms dans un livre, scellé, qui sera ouvert et lu devant tous à la fin des temps.

Il y a des hommes qui n'aiment qu'eux-mèmes; et ceux-ci sont des hommes de haine, car n'aimer | que soi c'est haïr les autres. Il y a des hommes d'orgueil, qui ne peuvent souffrir d'égaux, qui veulent toujours commander et dominer.

Il y a des hommes de convoitise, qui demandent toujours de l'or, des honneurs, des jouissances, et ne sont jamais rassasiés.

Il y a des hommes de rapine, qui épient le faible pour le dépouiller de force ou de ruse, et qui rôdent la nuit autour de la demeure de la veuve et de l'orphelin.

Il y a des hommes de meurtre, qui n'ont que des pensées violentes, qui disent: Vous êtes nos frères, et tuent ceux qu'ils appellent leurs frères, sitôt qu'ils les soupçonnent d'être opposés à leurs desseins, et écrivent des lois avec leur sang.

Il y a des hommes de peur, qui tremblent devant le méchant et lui baisent la main, espérant par là se dérober à son oppression, et qui, lorsqu'un innocent est attaqué sur la place publique, se hâtent de rentrer dans leur maison et d'en fermer la porte.

Tous ces hommes ont détruit la paix, la sûreté et la liberté sur la terre.

Vous ne retrouverez donc la liberté, la sûreté, la paix, qu'en combattant contre eux sans relâche.

La cité qu'ils ont faite est la cité de Satan; vous avez à rebâtir la cité de Dieu.

Dans la cité de Dieu, chacun aime ses frères comme soi-même; et c'est pourquoi nul n'est délaissé, nul n'y souffre, s'il est un remède à ses souffrances.

Dans la cité de Dieu, tous sont égaux, aucun ne

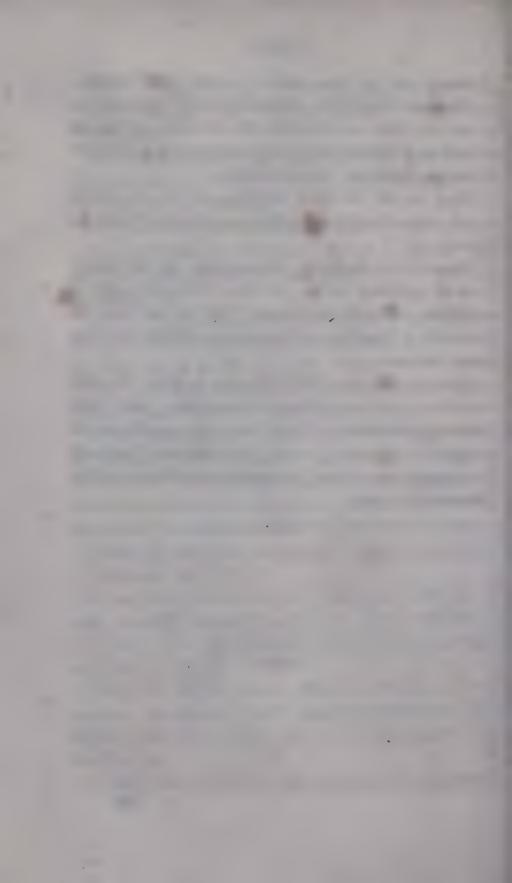
domine, car la justice seule y règne avec l'amour.

Dans la cité de Dieu, chacun possède sans crainte ce qui est à lui, et ne désire rien de plus, parce que ce qui est à chacun est à tous, et que tous possèdent Dieu qui renferme tous les biens.

Dans la cité de Dieu, nul ne sacrifie les autres à soi, mais chacun est prêt à se sacrifier pour les autres.

Dans la cité de Dieu, s'il se glisse un méchant, tous se séparent de lui, et tous s'unissent pour le contenir, ou pour le chasser : car le méchant est l'ennemi de chacun, et l'ennemi de chacun est l'ennemi de tous.

Quand vous aurez rebâti la cité de Dieu, la terre refleurira, et les peuples refleuriront, parce que vous aurez vaincu les fils de Satan qui oppriment les peuples et désolent la terre, les hommes d'orgueil, les hommes de rapine, les hommes de meurtre et les hommes de peur.



XXXV.

Si les oppresseurs des nations étaient abandonnés à eux-mêmes, sans appui, sans secours étranger, que pourraient-ils contre elles?

Si, pour les tenir en servitude, ils n'avaient d'aide que l'aide de ceux à qui la servitude profite, que serait-ce que ce petit nombre contre des peuples entiers?

Et c'est la sagesse de Dieu qui a ainsi disposé les choses, afin que les hommes puissent toujours résister à la tyrannie; et la tyrannie serait impossible, si les hommes comprenaient la sagesse de Dieu. Mais, ayant tourné leur cœur à d'autres pensées, les dominateurs du monde ont opposé à la sagesse de Dieu, que les hommes ne comprenaient plus, la sagesse du prince de ce monde, de Satan.

Or, Satan, qui est le roi des oppresseurs des nations, leur suggéra, pour affermir leur tyrannie,

une ruse infernale.

Il leur dit: Voici ce qu'il faut faire. Prenez dans chaque famille les jeunes gens les plus robustes, et donnez-leur des armes, et exercez-les à les manier, et ils combattront pour vous contre leurs pères et leurs frères; car je leur persuaderai que c'est une action glorieuse.

Je leur ferai deux idoles, qui s'appelleront Honneur et Fidélité, et une loi, qui s'appellera Obéissance passive.

Et ils adoreront ces idoles, et ils se soumettront à cette loi aveuglément, parce que je séduirai leur esprit, et vous n'aurez plus rien à craindre.

Et les oppresseurs des nations firent ce que Satan leur avait dit, et Satan aussi accomplit ce qu'il avait

promis aux oppresseurs des nations.

Et l'on vit les enfants du peuple lever le bras contre le peuple, égorger leurs frères, enchaîner leurs pères, et oublier jusqu'aux entrailles qui les avaient portés.

Quand on leur disait: Au nom de tout ce qui est sacré, pensez à l'injustice, à l'atrocité de ce qu'on vous ordonne; ils répondaient: Nous ne pensons point, nous obéissons.

Et, quand on leur disait: N'y a-t-il plus en vous

aucun amour pour vos pères, vos mères, vos frères et vos sœurs? ils répondaient: Nous n'aimons point, nous obéissons.

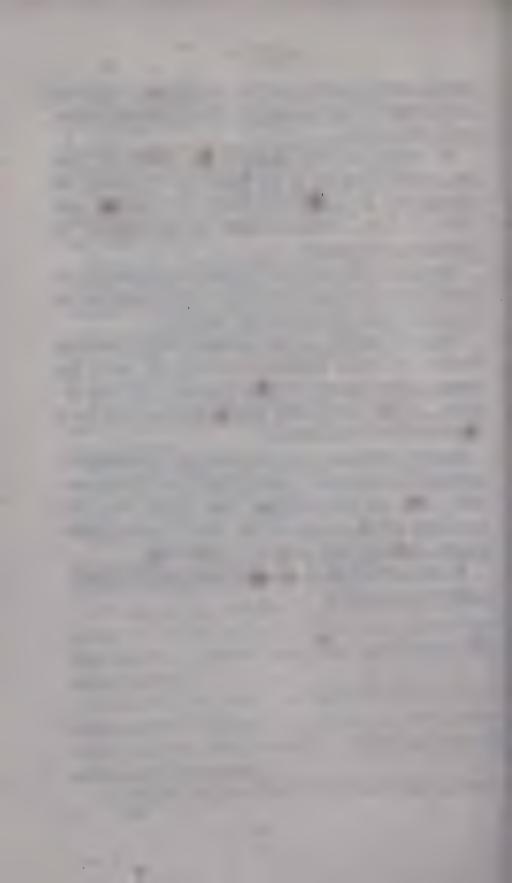
Et, quand on leur montrait les autels du Dieu qui a créé l'homme et du Christ qui l'a sauvé, ils s'écriaient: Ce sont là les dieux de la patrie; nos dieux, à nous, sont les dieux de ses maîtres, la Fidélité et l'Honneur.

Je vous le dis en vérité, depuis la séduction de la première femme par le Serpent, il n'y a point eu de séduction plus effrayante que celle-là.

Mais elle touche à sa fin. Lorsque l'esprit mauvais fascine des âmes droites, ce n'est que pour un temps. Elles passent comme à travers un rève affreux, et au réveil elles bénissent Dieu qui les a délivrées de ce tourment.

Encore quelques jours, et ceux qui combattaient pour les oppresseurs combattront pour les opprimés; ceux qui combattaient pour retenir dans les fers leurs pères, leurs mères, leurs frères et leurs sœurs, combattront pour les affranchir.

Et Satan fuira dans ses cavernes avec les dominateurs des nations.



XXXVI.

Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour Dieu et les autels de la patrie.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat!

Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour la justice, pour la sainte cause des peuples, pour les droits sacrés du genre humain.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat! Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour délivrer mes frères de

l'oppression, pour briser leurs chaînes et les chaînes du monde.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat! Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre contre les hommes iniques pour ceux qu'ils renversent et foulent aux pieds, contre les maîtres pour les esclaves, contre les tyrans pour la liberté.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat! Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour que tous ne soient plus la proie de quelques-uns, pour relever les têtes courbées et soutenir les genoux qui fléchissent.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat! Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour que les pères ne maudissent plus le jour où il leur fut dit : Un fils vous est né ; ni les mères celui où elles le serrèrent pour la première fois sur leur sein.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat! Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour que le frère ne s'attriste plus en voyant sa sœur se faner comme l'herbe que la terre refuse de nourrir; pour que la sœur ne regarde plus en pleurant son frère qui part et ne reviendra point.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat! Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour que chacun mange en paix le fruit de son travail ; pour sécher les larmes des petits enfants qui demandent du pain, et on leur répond : Il n'y a plus de pain ; on nous a pris ce qui en restait.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat!

Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour le pauvre, pour qu'il ne soit pas à jamais dépouillé de sa part dans l'héritage commun.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat!

Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour chasser la faim des chaumières, pour ramener dans les familles l'abondance, la sécurité et la joie.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat!

Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour rendre à ceux que les oppresseurs ont jetés au fond des cachots, l'air qui manque à leurs poitrines et la lumière que cherchent leurs yeux.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat! Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour renverser les barrières qui séparent les peuples, et les empêchent de s'embrasser comme les fils du même père, destinés à vivre unis dans un même amour.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat!

Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour affranchir de la tyrannie de l'homme la pensée, la parole, la conscience.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat!

Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour les lois éternelles descen-

dues d'en haut, pour la justice qui protége les droits, pour la charité qui adoucit les maux inévitables.

Que tes armes soient bénies, jeune soldat! Jeune soldat, où vas-tu?

Je vais combattre pour que tous aient au ciel un Dieu, et une patrie sur la terre.

Que tes armes soient bénies, sept fois bénies, jeune soldat!

XXXVII.

Pourquoi vous fatiguez-vous vainement dans votre misère? votre désir est bon, mais vous ne savez pas comment il doit s'accomplir.

Retenez bien cette maxime: Celui-là seul peut

rendre la vie, qui a donné la vie.

Vous ne réussirez à rien sans Dieu.

Vous vous tournez et retournez sur votre lit d'angoisse : quel soulagement avez-vous trouvé?

Vous avez abattu quelques tyrans, et il en est venu d'autres pires que les premiers.

Vous avez aboli des lois de servitude, et vous

avez eu des lois de sang ; et après, encore des lois de servitude.

Défiez-vous donc des hommes qui se mettent entre Dieu et vous, pour que leur ombre vous le cache. Ces hommes-là ont de mauvais desseins.

Car c'est de Dieu que vient la force qui délivre, parce que c'est de Dieu que vient l'amour qui unit.

Que peut faire pour vous un homme qui n'a que sa pensée pour règle, et pour loi que sa volonté?

Même quand il est de bonne foi et ne souhaite que le bien, il faut qu'il vous donne sa volonté pour loi et sa pensée pour règle.

Or, tous les tyrans ne font que cela.

Ce n'est pas la peine de bouleverser tout et de s'exposer à tout, pour substituer à une tyrannie une autre tyrannie.

La liberté ne consiste pas en ce que ce soit celuici qui domine au lieu de celui-là; mais en ce qu'aucun ne domine.

Or, où Dieu ne règne pas, il est nécessaire qu'un homme domine, et cela s'est vu toujours.

Le règne de Dieu, je vous le dis encore, c'est le règne de la justice dans les esprits et de la charité dans les cœurs: et il a sur la terre son fondement dans la foi en Dieu et la foi au Christ qui a promulgué la loi de Dieu, la loi de charité et la loi de justice.

La loi de justice enseigne que tous sont égaux devant leur père, qui est Dieu, et devant leur seul maître, qui est le Christ.

La loi de charité leur apprend à s'aimer et à

s'entr'aider comme les fils d'un même père et les disciples d'un même maître.

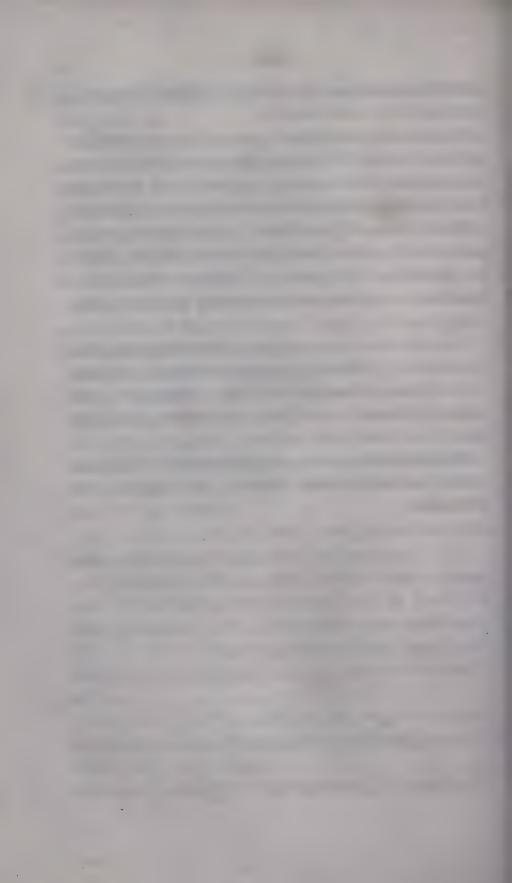
Et alors ils sont libres, parce que nul ne commande à autrui s'il n'a été librement choisi de tous pour commander: et on ne peut leur ravir leur liberté, parce qu'ils sont tous unis pour la défendre.

Mais ceux qui vous disent : Avant nous, on n'a pas su ce que c'est que la justice : la justice ne vient pas de Dieu, elle vient de l'homme : fiez-vous à nous, et nous vous en ferons une qui vous satisfera :

Ceux-là vous trompent, ou, s'ils vous promettent sincèrement la liberté, ils se trompent eux-mèmes.

Car ils vous demandent de les reconnaître pour maîtres, et ainsi votre liberté ne serait que l'obéissance à ces nouveaux maîtres.

Répondez-leur que votre maître est le Christ, que vous n'en voulez point d'autre, et le Christ vous affranchira.



XXXVIII.

Vous avez besoin de beaucoup de patience et d'un courage qui ne se lasse point : car vous ne vaincrez pas en un jour.

La liberté est le pain que les peuples doivent gagner à la sueur de leur front.

Plusieurs commencent avec ardeur, et puis ils se rebutent avant d'être arrivés au temps de la moisson.

Ils ressemblent aux hommes mous et lâches qui, ne pouvant supporter le travail d'arracher de leurs champs les mauvaises herbes à mesure qu'elles croissent, sèment et ne recueillent point, parce qu'ils ont laissé étouffer la bonne semence.

Je vous le dis, il y a toujours une grande famine dans ce pays-là.

Ils ressemblent encore aux hommes insensés qui, ayant élevé jusqu'au toit une maison pour s'y loger, négligent de la couvrir, parce qu'ils craignent un peu de fatigue de plus.

Les vents et les pluies viennent, et la maison s'écroule, et ceux qui l'avaient bâtie sont tout à coup ensevelis sous ses ruines.

Quand même vos espérances auraient été trompées non-seulement sept fois, mais septante fois sept fois, ne perdez jamais l'espérance.

Lorsqu'on a foi en elle, la cause juste triomphe toujours; et celui-là se sauve, qui persévère jusqu'à la fin.

Ne dites pas : C'est souffrir beaucoup pour des biens qui ne viendront que tard.

Si ces biens viennent tard, si vous n'en jouissez que peu de temps, ou que mème il ne vous soit pas donné d'en jouir du tout, vos enfants en jouiront, et les enfants de vos enfants.

Ils n'auront que ce que vous leur laisserez: voyez donc si vous voulez leur laisser des fers et des verges et la faim pour héritage.

Celui qui se demande ce que vaut la justice, profane en son cœur la justice; et celui qui suppute ce que coûte la liberté, renonce en son cœur à la liberté.

La liberté et la justice vous pèseront dans la mème

balance où vous les aurez pesées. Apprenez donc à en connaître le prix.

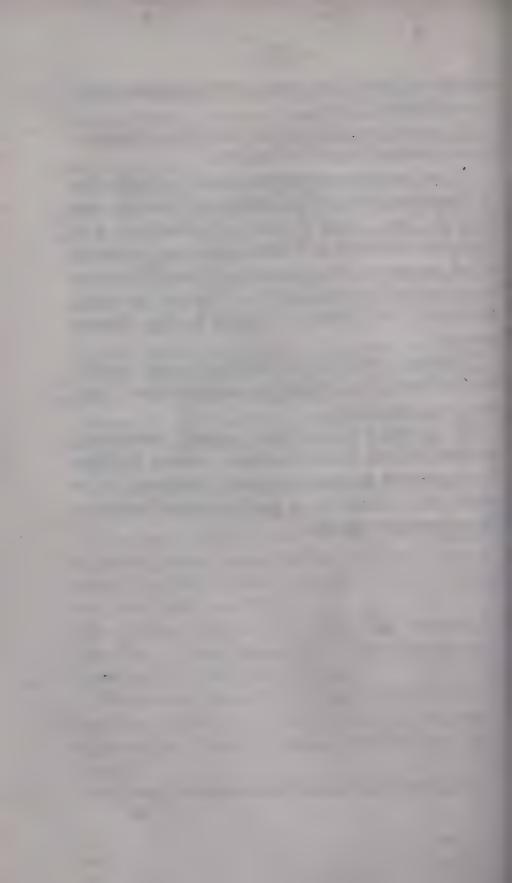
Il y a des peuples qui ne l'ont point connu, et

jamais misère n'égala leur misère.

S'il est sur la terre quelque chose de grand, c'est la résolution ferme d'un peuple qui marche sous l'œil de Dieu, sans se lasser un moment, à la conquête des droits qu'il tient de lui; qui ne compte ni ses blessures, ni les jours sans repos, ni les nuits sans sommeil, et qui se dit: Qu'est-ce que cela? la justice et la liberté sont dignes de bien d'autres travaux.

Il pourra éprouver des infortunes, des revers, des trahisons, être vendu par quelque Judas... Que rien ne le décourage.

Car, je vous le dis en vérité, quand il descendrait comme le Christ dans le tombeau, comme le Christ il en sortirait le troisième jour, vainqueur de la mort, et du prince de ce monde, et des ministres du prince de ce monde.



XXXIX.

Le laboureur porte le poids du jour, s'expose à la pluie, au soleil, aux vents, pour préparer par son travail la moisson qui remplira ses greniers à l'automne.

La justice est la moisson des peuples.

L'artisan se lève avant l'aube, allume sa petite lampe, et fatigue sans relâche pour gagner un peu de pain qui le nourrisse lui et ses enfants.

La justice est le pain des peuples.

Le marchand ne refuse aucun labeur, ne se plaint d'aucune peine; il use son corps et oublie le sommeil, afin d'amasser des richesses. La liberté est la richesse des peuples.

Le matelot traverse les mers, se livre aux flots et aux tempètes, se hasarde entre les écueils, souffre le froid et le chaud, afin de s'assurer quelque repos dans ses vieux ans.

La liberté est le repos des peuples.

Le soldat se soumet aux plus dures privations, il veille et combat, et donne son sang pour ce qu'il appelle la gloire.

La liberté est la gloire des peuples.

S'il est un peuple qui estime moins la justice et la liberté que le laboureur sa moisson, l'artisan un peu de pain, le marchand les richesses, le matelot le repos, et le soldat la gloire; élevez autour de ce peuple une haute muraille, afin que son haleine n'infecte pas le reste de la terre.

Quand viendra le grand jour du jugement des peuples, il lui sera dit : Qu'as-tu fait de ton âme? on n'en a vu ni signe ni trace. Les jouissances de la brute ont été pour toi. Tu as aimé la boue, va pourrir dans la boue.

Et le peuple, au contraire, qui au-dessus des biens matériels aura placé dans son cœur les vrais biens; qui, pour les conquérir, n'aura épargné aucun travail, aucune fatigue, aucun sacrifice, entendra cette parole:

A ceux qui ont une âme, la récompense des âmes. Parce que tu as aimé plus que toutes choses la liberté et la justice, viens, et possède à jamais la justice et la liberté.

Croyez-vous que le bœuf qu'on nourrit à l'étable pour l'atteler au joug, et qu'on engraisse pour la boucherie, soit plus à envier que le taureau qui cherche libre sa nourriture dans les forèts?

Croyez-vous que le cheval qu'on selle et qu'on bride, et qui a toujours abondamment du foin dans le râtelier, jouisse d'un sort préférable à celui de l'étalon qui, délivré de toute entrave, hennit et bondit dans la plaine?

Croyez-vous que le chapon à qui l'on jette du grain dans la basse-cour, soit plus heureux que le ramier qui, le matin, ne sait pas où il trouvera sa pâture de la journée?

Croyez-vous que celui qui se promène tranquille dans un de ces parcs qu'on appelle royaumes, ait une vie plus douce que le fugitif qui, de bois en bois et de rocher en rocher, s'en va le cœur plein de l'espérance de se créer une patrie?

Croyez-vous que le serf imbécile, assis à la table de son seigneur, en savoure plus les mets délicats, que le soldat de la liberté son morceau de pain noir?

Croyez-vous que celui qui dort, la corde au cou, sur la litière que lui a jetée son maître, ait un meil-leur sommeil que celui qui, après avoir combattu pendant le jour pour ne dépendre d'aucun maître, se repose quelques heures, la nuit, sur la terre, au coin d'un champ?

Croyez-vous que le lâche qui traîne en tout lieu la chaîne de l'esclave, soit moins chargé que l'homme de courage qui porte les fers du prisonnier?

Croyez-vous que l'homme timide qui expire dans son lit, étouffé par l'air infect qui environne la tyrannie, ait une mort plus désirable que l'homme ferme qui, sur l'échafaud, rend à Dieu son âme libre comme il l'a reçue de lui?

Le travail est partout et la souffrance partout : seulement il y a des travaux stériles et des travaux féconds, des souffrances infâmes et des souffrances glorieuses.

XLI.

Il s'en allait errant sur la terre. Que Dieu guide le pauvre exilé!

J'ai passé à travers les peuples, et ils m'ont regardé, et je les ai regardés, et nous ne nous sommes

point reconnus. L'exilé partout est seul.

Lorsque je voyais, au déclin du jour, s'élever du creux d'un vallon la fumée de quelque chaumière, je me disais: Heureux celui qui retrouve, le soir, le foyer domestique, et s'y assied au milieu des siens! L'exilé partout est seul.

Où vont ces nuages que chasse la tempète? Elle

me chasse comme eux, et qu'importe où? L'exilé partout est seul.

Ces arbres sont beaux, ces fleurs sont belles; mais ce ne sont point les fleurs ni les arbres de mon pays: ils ne me disent rien. L'exilé partout est seul.

Ce ruisseau coule mollement dans la plaine; mais son murmure n'est pas celui qu'entendit mon enfance: il ne rappelle à mon àme aucun souvenir. L'exilé partout est seul.

Ces chants sont doux, mais les tristesses et les joies qu'ils réveillent ne sont ni mes tristesses ni mes joies. L'exilé partout est seul.

On m'a demandé: Pourquoi pleurez-vous? et, quand je l'ai dit, nul n'a pleuré, parce qu'on ne me comprenait point. L'exilé partout est seul.

J'ai vu des vieillards entourés d'enfants, comme l'olivier de ses rejetons; mais aucun de ces vieillards ne m'appelait son fils, aucun de ces enfants ne m'appelait son frère. L'exilé partout est seul.

J'ai vu des jeunes filles sourire, d'un sourire aussi pur que la brise du matin, à celui que leur amour s'était choisi pour époux; mais pas une ne m'a souri. L'exilé partout est seul.

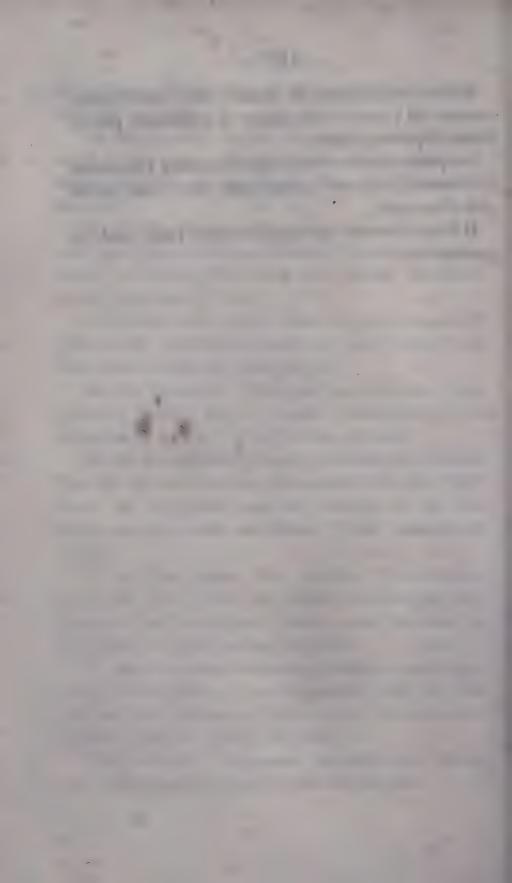
J'ai vu des jeunes hommes, poitrine contre poitrine, s'étreindre comme s'ils avaient voulu de deux vies ne faire qu'une vie; mais pas un ne m'a serré la main. L'exilé partout est seul.

Il n'y a d'amis, d'épouses, de pères et de frères que dans la patrie. L'exilé partout est seul. Pauvre exilé! cesse de gémir; tous sont bannis comme toi; tous voient passer et s'évanouir pères, frères, épouses, amis.

La patrie n'est point ici-bas : l'homme vainement l'y cherche ; ce qu'il prend pour elle n'est qu'un

gite d'une nuit.

Il s'en va errant sur la terre. Que Dieu guide le pauvre exilé!



XLII.

Et la patrie me fut montrée.

Je fus ravi au-dessus de la région des ombres; et je voyais le temps les emporter d'une vitesse indicible à travers le vide, comme on voit le souffle du midi emporter les vapeurs légères qui glissent dans le lointain sur la plaine.

Et je montais, et je montais encore; et les réalités, invisibles à l'œil de chair, m'apparurent, et j'entendis des sons qui n'ont point d'écho dans ce monde de fantômes.

Et ce que j'entendais, ce que je voyais, était si

vivant, mon âme le saisissait avec une telle puissance, qu'il me semblait qu'auparavant tout ce que j'avais cru voir et entendre n'était qu'un songe vague de la nuit.

Que dirai-je donc aux enfants de la nuit, et que peuvent-ils comprendre? Et des hauteurs du jour éternel ne suis-je pas aussi retombé avec eux au sein de la nuit, dans la région du temps et des ombres?

Je voyais comme un océan immobile, immense, infini; et, dans cet océan, trois océans: un océan de force, un océan de lumière, un océan de vie; et ces trois océans, se pénétrant l'un l'autre sans se confondre, ne formaient qu'un mème océan, qu'une mème unité indivisible, absolue, éternelle.

Et cette unité était Celui qui est ; et, au fond de son ètre, un nœud ineffable liait entre elles trois personnes qui me furent nommées, et leurs noms étaient le Père, le Fils, l'Esprit; et il y avait là une génération mystérieuse, un souffle mystérieux, vivant, fécond; et le Père, le Fils, l'Esprit, étaient Celui qui est.

Et le Père m'apparaissait comme une puissance qui, au dedans de l'Être infini, un avec elle, n'a qu'un seul acte, permanent, complet, illimité, qui est l'Être infini lui-mème.

Et le Fils m'apparaissait comme une parole, permanente, complète, illimitée, qui dit ce qu'opère la puissance du Père, ce qu'il est, ce qu'est l'Ètre infini.

Et l'Esprit m'apparaissait comme l'amour, l'effu-

sion, l'aspiration mutuelle du Père et du Fils, les animant d'une vie commune, animant d'une vie permanente, complète, illimitée, l'Ètre infini.

Et ces trois étaient un, et ces trois étaient Dieu, et ils s'embrassaient et s'unissaient dans l'impénétrable sanctuaire de la substance une; et cette union, cet embrassement, étaient, au sein de l'immensité, l'éternelle joie, la volupté éternelle de Celui qui est.

Et, dans les profondeurs de cet infini océan d'ètres, nageait et flottait et se dilatait la création; telle qu'une île qui incessamment dilaterait ses rivages au milieu d'une mer sans limites.

Elle s'épanouissait comme une fleur qui jette ses racines dans les eaux, et qui étend ses longs filets et ses corolles à la surface.

Et je voyais les êtres s'enchaîner aux êtres, et se produire et se développer dans leur variété innombrable, s'abreuvant, se nourrissant d'une séve qui jamais ne s'épuise, de la force, de la lumière et de la vie de Celui qui est.

Et tout ce qui m'avait été caché jusqu'alors se dévoilait à mes regards, que n'arrètait plus la matérielle enveloppe des essences.

Dégagé des entraves terrestres, je m'en allais de monde en monde comme ici-bas l'esprit va d'une pensée à une pensée ; et, après m'être plongé, perdu, dans ces merveilles de la puissance, de la sagesse et de l'amour, je me plongeais, je me perdais dans la source même de l'amour, de la sagesse et de la puissance.

Et je sentais ce que c'est que la patrie; et je m'eni-

vrais de lumière, et mon âme, emportée par des flots d'harmonie, s'endormait sur les ondes célestes dans une extase inénarrable.

Et puis je voyais le Christ à la droite de son Père, rayonnant d'une gloire immortelle.

Et je le voyais aussi comme un agneau mystique immolé sur un autel; des myriades d'anges et d'hommes rachetés de son sang l'environnaient, et, chantant ses louanges, ils lui rendaient grace dans le langage des cieux.

Et une goutte du sang de l'Agneau tombait sur la nature languissante et malade, et je la vis se transfigurer; et toutes les créatures qu'elle renferme palpitèrent d'une vie nouvelle, et toutes élevèrent la voix, et cette voix disait:

Saint, Saint, Saint, est Celui qui a détruit le mal et vaincu la mort.

Et le Fils se pencha sur le sein du Père, et l'Esprit les couvrit de son ombre, et il y eut entre eux un mystère divin: et les cieux en silence tressailli-

Vorwort.

Die Berfafferin der folgenden "Sfizzen aus dem Alltagsleben", die sich so rasch zu einer Lieblings= lecture des gebildeten Publikums, nicht allein in Schweden, sondern auch, seit sie bei uns durch Ueber= setzung eingeführt, in Deutschland aufgeschwungen ha= ben, ist die Tochter eines reichen Kausmanns und Bergwerksbesigers in Schweden, und im Jahre 1802 geboren. Mach dem Tode ihres Baters lebte fie guerft in Schonen, dann auf dem Landgute einer Freundin in Morwegen, worauf sie ihren Aufenthalt in Stockholm nahm, wo sie noch jest wohnt. Den edlen, in Liebe thätigen Ginn, der ihre Schriften so wohlthuend durchweht, beweist die Verfasserin auch in ihrem Leben. Werke ächter Menschenliebe sind ihre tägliche Beschäftigung, und den Ertrag ihrer driftstellerischen Arbeiten wendet sie einer Erzie: bungsanstalt zu, der sie vorsteht, und die der Haupt: gegenstant ihrer Sorge und Thätigkeit ist, deren Leitung sie zu ihrem Berufe gemacht hat.

Auf welcher Stufe poetischer Kraft nun die Versfasserin steht, möge der Leser selbst aus den nachfolzgenden Blättern und Bänden entnehmen. Eine seltene Gabe, alltägliche Gegenstände mit dem Zauber der Poesie zu umkleiden, dem Familien=Stilleben die ansscheinend geringfügigsten und doch so frappanten Züge gewissermassen zu stehlen, eine hohe Kunst der Chazrakterzeichnung, ein eben so köstlicher, als bei Frauen seltener Humor: alles dieses bietet ein Ganzes, das den schriftstellerischen Erfolg der Verfasserin in der That erklärlich macht.

Je geringer die Zahl der Bücher ist, die sich ganz und gar dazu eignen, in die Familie eingeführt zu werden, desto freudiger müssen diese Stizzen begrüßt werden, die, aus dem Familienleben hervorgegangen, demselben eine so edle und gesunde geistige Nahrung zuführen und eine Lieblingslectüre für alle Glieder gebildeter Familien werden müssen.

Das alte Norwegen.

Noch tobt der Borzeit Sturm um Bergesfläche, Noch hält das Meer dort immer Wacht, Das Waldgesaus, den Donnersturz der Bäche Hat feine Zeit zur Ruh gebracht: Noch stets ist die Natur dieselbe — Wunch.

Gottes Schatten durchwandert die Natur.

Linné.

Lang ehe ein Lied der Freude oder Trauer aus Norwegens Thälern emporstieg, ehe aus seinen Hütten der Rauch in die Lüste emporwirbelte, oder eine Art einen Baum in seinen Wäldern fällte, ehe König Nor von Jotunheim auszog, um seine geraubte Schwester zu suchen, und dem Lande, das er durchwanderte, einen Namen gab, ja ehe noch ein Norweger lebte, stand das hohe Dovregebirge mit dem Snöhätta schon vor dem Antlike des Schöpfers da.

Nach Westen hin erstreckt sich die riesige Gebirgs=
fette bis Romsdahlshorn, dessen Fuß das westliche Meer bespült, südwärts bildet sie unter verschiedenen Namen (wie z. B. Langsjeld, Sognefjeld, Filesjeld, Hardangersjeld u. s. w.) den unermeßlichen Gebirgs=
zug, der auf eine Strecke von einhundert und fünfzig geographischen Geviertmeilen Alles, was die Natur Gro=
ses, Schauerliches, Schönes und Anstaunenswerthes besitzt, darbietet. Hier steht noch, wie in den ersten Tagen der Schöpfung in den oberen Tellemarken das von unsichtbarer Hand gebaute "Berghaus," dessen

Streit u. Frieden. 1.

Eistwälle und Thürme nur ber, welcher fie erbaut fturgen kann; noch kommen, wie am Schöpfungsmorge: zur Commerzeit auf ben schneebebeckten Zinnen ber U gebirge "Morgen = und Abendroth zum flüchtigen Bri berkuß" zusammen; noch bonnern, wie damals, die Gief bache, wenn fie fich in bie Schluchten hinabsturzer noch spiegeln die Eisflächen ber Jöckels (Gleticher) bi selben Gegenstände ab, noch finden sich, wie damal Verwunderung und Grausen erregende Alpenzüge, b nie von einem menschlichen Jug bestiegen wurden, The fer und Wälder; einsame Naturzellen, auf die nur be Abler und die Sonne des hohen Sommers blicker Hier ift bas alte, aber ewig junge Norwegen, bie faunt ber Blid bes Beobachters, fein Berg ermunter fich, er vergißt ben eignen Schmerz, Die eigne Freud vergißt alle Kleinlichkeiten, indem er mit einem heile gen Grauen ahnt, daß "Gottes Schatten die Natu durchwandert."

Diefer Lanbstrich liegt im Bergen Norwegens. 3 beine Seele ermattet vom Geräusch ber Welt, ober be Rleinlichkeiten eines ärmlichen Alltagslebens überbrugig ist sie von dicker Stubenluft, von Bücher-, Gesellschafts oder anderem Staub (benn es gibt fo viele Arten bee felben, welche bie Seele mit einem grauen Staubmante bededen) geplagt, ober von tiefen, nagenden Schmerze zerriffen - bann, o bann flüchte bich in bas Ber Morwegens, bort wirft bu, auf ben frischen, mächtige Bergensschlag lauschend, allein mit ben großen, ftum men, und boch fo beredten Raturgegenständen, neu Rraft, neues Leben einathmen. Sier ftaubt es nich Frisch und flar ist bier bas Leben, wie an bem Tag ihrer Schöpfung. Willst du das Große, Majestätisch feben, so schaue ben Gaufta an, wie er sich auf seiner koloffalen Knieen, sechstausend Juß hoch über bie Erd oberfläche erhebt, blicke auf die wilden Riesengestalter ber Hurrungen, Fannarauks und Mugnafjelds, sehr wie die Rjuhan, Vörings und Bedals Wasserfälle sich schäumend und donnernd über die Berge in den Absgrund stürzen. Willst du beim Angenehmen, Lieblichen verweilen? du sindest es in friedlicher Abgeschiedenheit mitten unter diesen grauenerregenden Scenen. Die Senenerhütte steht im engen Thale, Viehheerden weiden auf den schönen Graswiesen, die Sennerin mit frischer Haut, blauen Augen und blonden Haarslechten treibt sie auf die Weide, indem sie einfache, mildwehmüthige Meslodien des Landes singt, und, wie ein Spiegel für dieses liebliche Bild, liegt mitten im Thale ein klarer, tieser, stiller See von einer, den meisten Gletscherwassern eigenthümlichen halbbläulichen Farbe. Alles athmet einen idvilischen Frieden.

Dennoch scheint eine Todesahnung schon in den Morzgenstunden der Schöpfung deutlich ihr Siegel auf diese Landschaft geprägt zu haben. Die Riesenschatten der dunklen Bergmassen fallen in Thäler, in welchen nur Moos wächst, in Seen, deren stilles Wasser mit nie schmelzendem Eis angefüllt ist, — w. z. B. das Koldezthal, der Koldesee mit den todten, graugelben Usern, — Todtenstille, die nur von dem Donner der Lawinen und dem Krachen der Gletscher unterbrochen wird, berrscht in dieser Einöde. Kein Vogel erhebt seine Schwingen oder seinen Gesang in dieser traurigen Gegend, nur des Kukuks melodische Seufzer trägt der Sommerwind auf seinen Schwingen dahin.

Willst du aber das Leben in seiner ganzen Pracht und Herrlichkeit schauen, so sieh die Umarmung des Winters und Sommers im alten Norwegen, steige hinunter in die Ebenen Svalems, in Aamaadts und Sillejords Thäler oder das paradiesischschöne Westsjordal, welches die Manelf still und spiegelklar durchsließt, und kleine lichtgrüne mit Glockenblumen und wohlrieschenden Waldlilien bewachsene Inseln in ihrem Lauf umschließt; sieh, wie sich die Silberbäche vom Gebirge, zwischen Baumgruppen und fruchtbaren Feldern, nieder schlängeln, sieh, wie hinter den nächsten Bergen mi ihren Laubwäldern sich die Schneeberge wie würdige Patriarchen, die auf ein jüngeres Geschlecht nieder blicken, erheben, betrachtet in diesen Thälern das Farbenspiel des Morgens und Abends auf den Höhen unt in den Tiefen, sieh die fürchterliche Pracht des Gewitters, des Regenbogens stille Herrlichkeit, der sich über dem Wasserfall wölbt — ja dies Alles sieh, höre, und athme wieder auf, bedrückte Seele!

Von diesen schönen, allgemein bekannten Scenen ziehen wir jetzt in eine unbekannterere Gegend, die große Thalstrecke, wo das Skogshorn sich in die Wolken erhebt, die Urunda hell zwischen Klippen fließt und Djupadahls Wassersall nicht minder reißend und stolz lärmt,
weil er selten von den Blicken neugieriger Fremden bewundert wird. Wir lassen und in einer Ebene nieder,
deren Namen und Lage wir Keinem auf der Karte

aufzusuchen rathen. Wir nennen fie:

2

Heimthal.

"Rennst du die tiefen Matien, Kirchenstiu, gehült in Schatten, Ohne Heerden, ohne Steg und Namen?" Belhaven.

Geimthal nennen wir einen Theil von Hallingthal und verlegen es in das Kirchspiel Aal und lassen die Gelehrten in * sich über unsere Dreistigkeit wundern. Es hat eben so wenig wie das Mutterthal eine historische Denkwürdigkeit aufzuweisen. Von den alten hallingdalschen Königen weiß man sehr wenig. Nur

einige Bautasteine, einige Grabmäler berichten dunkle Sagen von den Mächtigen, welche gewesen sind. Hier wohnt ein Volk, seit uralten Zeiten sowol durch seine Mäßigkeit, seine Genügsamkeit in harten Verhältnissen, jo wie auch burch seinen wilden und streitbaren Sinn bekannt, aber Rube und Unruhe haben hier ohne Larm und Glanz zwischen Urgebirgen und Föhrenwäldern, unbemerkt von der übrigen Welt, gebaut und gewohnt; fo lebten, fo ftarben fie.

Ein Fluß — ber aus dem Hallenjokul entspringt, fließt burch Beimthal. Von wildem Muthe schäumend, fturzt er burch einen engen Bergpaß ins Thal, findet hier ein freieres Feld, beruhigt sich am Fluß spiegel= flar zwischen grunen Ufern, bis ber Strand wieber von Granitbergen znsammengedrängt wird. Dann wird er wieder von Unruh ergriffen und rauscht in wilden Krümmungen nieder, bis er sich in die große Hallings=

dalelf wirft und "darin stirbt."

Wo sich der Fluß in dem erweiterten Thale auß=
breitet, liegt ein ziemlich bedeutendes Gut. Ein wohl= gebautes, aber etwas verfallenes hölzernes Wohnhaus behnt seine Flügel in bas Thal hinab, aus. Bon hier aus hat man eine schöne Aussicht weit, weit hin-aus in die bläuliche Ferne. Waldbewachsene Höhen dachen sich gegen das Wasser hin ab, von niedrigen Feldgehägen und schönen Rasengangen umgeben, lie= gen die Hütten am Fuß des Gebirges zerstreut. Am jenseitigen Ufer bes Flusses und ein Viertel Weges vom Gute entfernt, erhebt eine Kapelle ihre friedliche Spite, dahinter zieht sich allmählig bas Thal zusammen.

Un einem fühlen Septemberabend famen Gafte in bem vorher lange Zeit unbewohnten Hause an. Es waren dies eine ältliche Dame, von edlem aber düfte= rem Aussehen und tief in Trauer gekleidet, und ein junges, blühendes Mädchen. Sie wurden von einem jungen Manne, ber im Orte "Gerr Berwalter" genannt

wurde, empfangen. Die schwarzgefleibete Dame bega sich in bas Saus und ward späterhin mehrere Dto nate lang nirgends niehr im Thale gesehen. Dan nannte fie bort "Frau Obriftin" und fagte, bag Frai Aftrid Sjelm manche munberbare Schicffale, über bi verschiedene Gerüchte im Umlauf waren, erlebt hätte Auf bem Gute Semb, welches von bem großen Beim thal gebildet murde und ihr väterliches Erbtheil mar hatte man sie, seit ihrer Verheirathung, nach welche fie biefen Ort sogleich verließ, nicht wieder gesehen Jett, als Wittme hatte sie ihre Jugendheimath wiede: aufgesucht. Man wußte auch und sprach bavon, baj ihre Begleiterin eine Schwedinn mare, welche fie vor einem ber schwedischen Bäber aus, wo sie sich ber Sommer über aufgehalten, hierher begleitet hatte, unt ber Haushaltung vorstehen sollte; man sagte auch daß Sufanna Björk so gut wie unumschränkt über ber ökonomischen Theil des Hauses und bessen weibliches Personal: Larina bas Stubenmadchen, Karina bie Magd, über Petra die Köchinn, so wie über die Dieh: mägde Matthea "Bubeja" und Göran "Fjösjente" unt alle deren vier= und zweifüßige Untergebene herrschte; mit diesen letteren wollen wir nähere Bekanntschaft machen.

Die Chierchen. Das Haderwaffer-

erfte Streit.

"Für Norwegen! Für Comeden!" Streitende.

Der Morgen war flar und frisch; die Septembersonne beleuchtete bas Thal, die Hütten rauchten. Marienmäntelchen mit hellen, in deren gereifelten Blätztern zitternden Verlen, die Silberwurz mit ihren gelben Blumen und silberreinglänzenden Blättern schimmerten einen Fußweg, der sich einen moosbewachsenen Bergzücken hinab schlängelte, entlang in der Morgensonne. Dieser Weg führte zu einer Quelle mit dem klarsten Wasser, welches, nachdem es einen Teich gebildet hat, seine sprudelnden Streisen murmelnd in den Fluß rinznen läßt.

Sieher ging an dem schönen Morgen Susanne Björk, in Begleitung von Hähnen, Hühnern und Küchlein.

Vor ihr wackelte mit anspruchsvollem Geschnatter eine Heerde Gänse, welche, bis auf eine graue, sammt und sonders schneeweiß waren. Diese graue wankte mit muthlosem Aussehen eine Strecke hinter den anderen her, wozu sie von einem weißen Rausbold, der, sobald sie sich nähern wollte, sie mit ausgestrecktem Halse und gellem Geschrei zurücktrieb, gezwungen wurde. Die graue Gans floh stets vor dem weißen Tyrannen, aber die kahlen Stellen an Kopf und Hals zeigten, daß sie nicht ohne vorher durch heftige Kämpse von der Nuzlosigkeit ihres Potestirens übersührt zu sein, in diese bedrückte Lage gekommen war. Keine von den weiblichen Gänsen kümmerte sich um die Mißhandelte, darum nahm sich Susanna ihrer aber auch desto eistiger an und suchte sie durch gute Bissen und gute Worte für die Ungerechtigkeit ihres Geschlechts zu trösten.

Nach den Gänsen kamen die bescheideneren aber dummen Enten, der kalkutische Hahn mit dem leicht ausbrausenden Charakter und seine einfältigen, theils weißen, theils schwarzen Frauen, und endlich das unzuhige Geschlecht der Hühner mit ihren zierlichen, kampselustigen Hähnen. Am niedlichsten aber war ein Bolk Tauben, die zugleich traulich und doch scheu, sich bald auf Susannens Schultern und ausgestreckte Hand setzeten, bald ausstlogen und ihr Haupt in schimmernden

Kreisen umschwebten und dann sich auf das Feld nieberließen, wo sie zierlich mit den befransten Füßen
umhertrippelten und sich zur Quelle niederschmiegten,
um zu trinken, während die Gänse unter lautem Gelärme im Flusse plätscherten und badeten und das Wasser in einem Perlenregen über das Gras hinspritzten. Sogar hier wurde, zu Susannaß großem Aerger,
die graue Gans von den weißen gezwungen, sich von
den übrigen entsernt zu baden.

Susanna sah auf das schöne, farbenbunte Gemälde vor sich, auf die kleinen Thierchen, die um sie her spielten und sich freuten, und sichtbares Entzücken strahlte in ihren gen Himmel aufgeschlagenen Augen, indem sie mit gefalteten Händen leise sagte: Mein Herr und Gott! wie schön! Aber sie suhr erschrocken zusammen, denn eine starke Stimme ließ sich in diesem Augenblicke neben ihr

also vernehmen:

"Die herrlich ist mein Baterland Das meerumfranzte, alte Norweg."

Und der Verwalter, Harald Bergmann, begrüßte Susfanna lächelnd, diese aber sagte etwas verdrießlich:

"Sie schreien bermaßen, daß Sie bie Tauben mit 3h=

rem alten Norweg verscheuchen."

"Ja," — fuhr Harald in demselben begeisterten Tone fort:

> "Ja, herrlich ist mein Baterland, Das alte klippenseste Norwez, Mit Sommerthälern, Winterbergen, Dem Zahn der Zeiten ewig troßend."

Alte Norweg! sagte Susanna, wie oben; ich glaube es ist wirklich scandalös Sie von Ihrem alten Norweg reden zu hören, als wäre es älter und ewiger als der liebe Herrgott selber.

"Und wo in der ganzen Welt" — rief Harald — finden Sie noch so ein Land mit einem so stolzen,

ernsten Volke, "so herrlichen Strömen und so hohen,

boben Bergen ?"

Wir haben Gottlob in Schweden auch Leute und Berge — antwortete Susanna — Sie sollten fie nur

einmal sehen, das hat eine ganz andere Art. Andere Art? Was ist denn das für eine Art? Ich wette, daß es in Schweden nicht eine einzige Bans gibt, die fich mit unferen herrlichen norwegischen Ban= sen veraleichen fann.

Eine nicht, aber tausend, und alle größer und fetter als diese hier. In Schweden ist Alles größer und

prächtiger als in Norweg.

Größer? das Volt ist boch wahrhaftig viel kleiner und schwächer.

Schwächer? Rleiner? Sie sollten nur die Leute in

Ubbevalla, meiner Baterstadt feben.

Wie fann man nur in Udbevalla geboren fein? Wohnen benn ba wirklich Leute? Wie kann man in ber Stadt wohnen? Es ist eine Schande in einer folchen Stadt zu wohnen, es ift eine Schande nur burchzufah= ren. Sie ift ja jo erbarmlich flein, bag wenn bas Rab eines Reisewagens noch in einem Ende ber Stadt ift, das Pferd seinen Ropf ichon aus dem andern wieder hinaussteckt. Sprechen Sie nur nicht von Ubbevalla.

Nein, mit Ihnen ist es auch gewiß nicht ber Mühe werth, davon zu reben; Sie haben nie etwas anderes als Ihre norwegischen Städte gesehen, barum können Sie fich auch gar feinen Begriff von einer schwedischen

machen.

Gott bewahre mich davor, daß ich je solche Städte zu seben bekommen sollte! Und bann Ihre schwedischen Seeen, was find bas für elende Pfüten gegen unser herrliches norwegisches Meer.

Unfere Secen — Pfügen? fie find groß genug um

gang Norweg barin zu ertränken.

Ba, ha, ha! Bang Schweden ift im Bergleich zu

unserem norwegischen Meer nicht größer als meine Mütze! und dieses Meer würde unaufhörlich über Schweden zusammenschlagen, wenn unser Norweg es nicht großmüthig mit seiner Granitbrust schützte.

Schweden beschützt sich ganz allein und bedarf keiner

anderen Sulfe. Schweben ift ein prächtiges Land.

Nicht halb so prächtig als Norwegen. Norweg reicht mit seinen Bergen bis an den Himmel, es ist dem lies ben Gott am nächsten.

Norwegen kann sich wohl aufdrängen, aber Unser

herr liebt Schweden mehr.

Norwegen! sage-ich. Schweden! sage ich.

Norwegen! Norwegen hoch! Lassen Sie und, sehen! wer am höchsten wirst, gewinnt für sein Land. Norwegen zuerst und am höchsten! — Damit warf Harald einen Stein hoch in die Luft.

Schweden zuerst und zulett! — rief Susanna, in=

bem sie mit aller Kraft ihren Stein schlenderte.

Der Zufall wollte baß beibe Steine in der Luft anseinander stießen, worauf sie mit einem starken Geräusch ins Wasser, um welches sich gerade das Federvieh versammelt hatte, sielen. Die Gänse schrieen, Hühner und Enten flatterten erschreckt, auch die kalkutischen Hühner eilten, vom Kalkuthahne, der seine Würde ganz vergaß, gesolgt, nach dem Walde, alle Tauben waren im Nu verschwunden, und mit glühenden Gesichtern, und heftig streitend, wessen Stein am höchsten geslogen wäre, standen Harald und Susanna an dem aufgerührten, gestrübten Harald und Susanna an dem aufgerührten,

Der Augenblick ist vielleicht nicht ber passendste, aber nichts bestoweniger wollen wir ihn benutzen, um eine Schilderung der beiden streitenden Versonen obenhin

zu machen.

Harald Bergmann hatte ausbrucksvolle, etwas scharf= markirte Züge, braune Augen, in denen der Ausbruck großen Ernstes leicht mit dem großer Schelmerei abswechselte. Das dunkle Haar siel in schönen Ringeln über eine Stirne, welche, wie man deutlich sehen konnte, helle Gedanken zu beherbergen im Stande war. Er war schön und proportionirt gewachsen, und alle seine Bewegungen zeigten große Leichtigkeit und Geschmeis diakeit.

Er war aus einer angesehenen Familie, hatte eine wohlbewachte Jugend gut benutt und ward von Bestannten und Freunden für einen hoffnungsvollen, jungen Mann gehalten. Er hatte eben das —— sche Sesminarium verlassen, und war gesonnen eine Reise in's Ausland zu machen um seine Kenntniß in der Ackersbaufunde zu vermehren, da brachte ihn der Jufall mit der Obristin Hjelm, als sie in ihr Vaterland als Wittwe zurücksehrte, zusammen. Die Folge davon war eine Verändrung seiner Pläne. In einem Briefe an seine Schwester äußerte er sich darüber wie folgt:

"Ich fann Dir, Allette, ben Ginbruck ben fie auf mich gemacht hat nicht recht schilbern. Ich fonnte Dir ihren hohen Wuchs, ihre edle Haltung, ihr Genicht, das trot vieler Runzeln und einer gelblichen Farbe boch unver= fennbare Epuren großer Schönheit zeigt, die hohe Stirne, um welche fich einige ichwarze, mit grau ge= mischte Loden unter ber einfachen Saube hervordräng= ten, schildern, ich könnte Dir von ihren tiefen ernsten Au= gen, ihrer leifen und boch feierlichen Stimme erzählen, und bennoch konntest Du Dir keinen Begriff von bem, was sie eigentlich zu einer so ungewöhnlichen Frau er= bebt, machen. Man hat mir gefagt, bag ihr Leben eben jo durch mufterhafte Tugend, als durch Leiden ausge= zeichnet war, und Tugend und Leiden haben in ihr eine ftille Größe, eine Größe welche bie Gunftlinge bes Gluds und ber Natur erwerben, und bie ihrem ganzen Wesen eingeprägt ist, hervorgerufen. Sie fam mir vor, wie ein Weien, bem alle Kleinlichkeiten ber Welt unbeachtet vorbeigleiten. Ich fühlte vor ihr unwillstührlich eine Chrfurcht, wie ich sie noch nie vor einem Menschen empfunden habe, und zugleich ein Verlangen mich ihr nähern zu dürfen, ihr nützlich zu sein, ihre Achtung zu verdienen und zu gewinnen, — es schien mir, als ob ich dadurch selbst etwas größer, oder wenigstens etwas besser werden würde. Als ich nun vernahm, daß sie einen ordentlichen und geschickten Verwalter sür ihr sehr versallenes Gut suche, bot ich mich in als ler (oder ohne alle) Scheu, als solchen an und emps fand eine fast kindische Freude darüber, daß ich angenommen wurde, und reiste sogleich auf ihr Gut um mich daselbst heimisch zu machen, und Alles zu ihrem Empfange vorzubereiten."

So weit Haralb; jett zu Susanna.

Barbara Susanna Björk war nicht schön, ja sie konnte nicht einmal anmurhig genannt werden, denn dazu war sie zu groß und stark, aber sie konnte doch recht gut aussehen. Ihre blauen Augen blickten so treu und ossen in die Welt hinein, ihr rundes volles Gesicht zeugte von Gesundheit, Güte und Lebenslust, und wenn Susanna guter Dinge war, wenn sich ihr frischer Mund zu einem berzlichen Lachen öffnete, so konnte man schon froh werden, wenn man sie nur ansfah. Wahr ist es aber, daß sie oft bei schlechter Laune war, und da sah sie nicht besonders angenehm aus. Sie war ein großes, wohlgebautes Mädchen, zu kräftig in ihren Bewegungen als daß diese schön gewesen wären, und ihr ganzes Wesen verrieth einen gewissen Wangel an Bildung.

Armes Kind! wie sollte sie die auch in der Unordnung, Armuth, in dem eitlen falschen Hause, wo sie den größten Theil ihres Lebens hingebracht hatte, erhalten baben!

Ihr Vater war Bürgermeister in Ubbevalla, ihre Mutter starb, als sie noch kein Jahr alt war. Des Va-

ters Schwester fam ins Saus. Diese fummerte sich um die Wirthichaft und ihre Raffeeschwestern und ließ ihren Bruder fich im Rlubb unterhalten, und bas Rind für fich selbst forgen. Die ganze Erziehung ber kleinen Su= janna bestand barin, baß sie sich selbst nothbürftig le= ien lehrte, und daß man, wenn fie unartig war, zu ihr fagte: "Ift Barb'ra wieder oben auf? pfui Barb'ra! hinaus mit ber Barb'ra! "und wenn fie wieber artig war: So jest ist Sannchen wieder ba! Willfommen, liebes Sannchen!" biese Methode hatte zwar an und für sich recht viel gefunde Moral, wenn sie nur etwas vernünftiger angewendet worden ware; aber oft redete man die Kleine: "Barb'ra" an, wenn es gar nicht nothwendig mar, und das hatte die Wirkung, die be= nannte Personlichfeit öftere heraufzubeschwören. Inbeg gewöhnte fich bas Rind baran, als Barbara binauszu= gehen und als Sannchen wieder hereinzukommen, und Dies gab ihr schon frühzeitig einen Begriff von ben zwei in ihr, wie in jedem Menschen, vorhandenen Na= turen. Dies Bewußtsein stieg bei Susanna's Religi= onsunterricht, ber einzigen Bildung, welche bas arme Dlädchen genoß, zur vollkommenen Klarheit, aber wie unendlich nutt gerade biese Bildung einem offenen Sinn, wenn fie von einem tuchtigen Lehrer beigebracht ward. Barbara war jo glücklich, einen folchen zu ba= ben, und fie lernte jest in "Barb'ra" irdischen Bolter= geift, ber bekämpft werden und in "Sannchen" ben himmlischen Engel ber entfesselt und geläutert werben follte, fennen, und von biefer Stunde an begann ein offener Kampf zwischen "Barb'ra" und "Sannchen" ber nich täglich erneuerte, und in dem meistentheils die Lettere Die Dberhand behielt, wenn Sufanna nicht all= zuplötlich von einem ihr angebornen Stolze und hef= tigen Sinne überrascht wurde.

Alls Susanna in ihrem zwölsten Jahre war, verhei= rathete sich ihr Vater zum zweiten Male, ward aber wiederum Wittwer, nachdem ibm seine Gattinn eine Tochter gegeben batte, und zwei Monate barauf folgte er seinen beiden voraus gegangenen Gattinnen in's Grab.

Rabe Vermandte nabmen nich der beiden vater = und mutterlosen Kinter an. In ber neuen Beimath lernte Sufanna Bieles bulben, benn ba ne groß und ftart und dabei anstellig und gutmutbig mar, machte man ne bald zur Dienerinn ber ganzen Familie. Die Tochter bes Saufes fagten, bag nie zu nichts Underem tauge, benn nie konne nichts lernen, und habe außerorbentlich robe Manieren; über bies fei fie um Gotteswillen auf= genommen, babe nichts u. f. w. Diefes Alles gab man ibr oftmals auf eine iconungslose Art zu versteben und Sufanna vergoß barüber manche bittere Thrane bes Zornes und bes Grams. Aber einen Mund gab es, welcher nur im Tone kosenber Liebe gu Gusannen iprad, es mar ber ibrer fleinen Schwefter, ber gold: gelocten Sulva. Sie batte in Susannens Armen ibre Diege, in ibrer Fürsorge ben Schun ber liebreichsten Mutter gefunden, benn icon feit ber Geburt ber fleinen Verlaffenen nabm fich Sufanna ihrer an, und nie liebte eine junge Mutter ihr Erstgeborenes inniger, marmer ale Sufanna ibre fleine Gulba, welche unter ibrer Vilege bas iconfte und liebensmurbigne Kind murte, welches man nur feben fonnte. Webe bem, ber ber fleinen Sulda etwas zu Leite that! er batte bas gange Gemicht von Sufannas oft recht banbgreiflichem Born gu empfinben. Sulda's megen errrug Sufanna bier Die vielen mubieligen Arbeiten, ba fie aber fein Ende berfelben abiab und nich und ibre fleine Schwefter gleichwol faum anftändig fleiben fonnte, überdies auch burch ibre vielen Beidaftigungen nich verbindert fant biefer bie Pflege, beren ne bedurfte, angedeiben gu laffen, fab nie fich in ibrem gmanzigften Jabre nach einer anderen befferen Stelle um.

Von der engen Wohnung, wo ne so schwere Tage

verlebte, konnte sie einen Baum seben, ber hinter einer Planke seine Zweige über die Straße ausstreckte. Manchen Frühlings = und Sommerabend saß Susanna, wenn die anderen Hausbewohner eine Lustsahrt gemacht hatten, stille in dem kleinen Zimmer, das sie für sich und die Schwester eingerichtet batte, bei der kleinen schlummernden Hulda, und betrachtete mit stiller Wehmuth von ihrem Fenster aus den grünen Baum, dessen Zweige und Laub so freundlich und einladend im Winde sich schaukelten und herübernickten.

Nach und nach winfte das grüne Laub Gedanken, Entwürfe hervor, welche sich endlich zu einem sesten Bilde oder vielmehr zu einem Gute gestaltete, welches von dieser Zeit an das Paradies ihrer Seele und das Ziel ihres Lebens war; es bestand aus einer Landstelle, einem kleinen Hof, den Susanna packten, behauen und durch ibre Arbeitsamkeit und Bedachtsamkeit einträglich machen wollte. Sie pflanzte Karrosseln, melkte die Kühe und butterte, sie säete, erntete, die Arbeit war ibr eine Freude, denn auf dem weichen Grase unter dem grünen, sich schaukelnden Baume saß die kleine Hulda und spielte mit Blumen, ihre blauen Augen strabten vor Wonne, und keine Sorge, keine Noth trat sie an.

Susannas Sinn und Willensfraft war barauf gerichtet diesen Vorsatz verwirklichen zu können. Der nächste Schritt war also, einen guten Dienst zu bekommen, bei dem sie, wenn sie ihren Lobn zusammensparte, eine Summe Geldes, welche hinreichte ihr landmännsches Vorhaben beginnen zu können, erhalten möchte. Susanna bildete sich ein, daß sie dies in wenigen Jahten bewerkstelligen könne, und sah sich beshalb nach einem passenden Diehst um.

Unter ben Babegästen, welche in biesem Jahre bas unweit Ubbevalla liegende Gustansberg besuchten, befand sich ein norwegischer Oberst mit seiner Frau,

ber Oberste war schlagrührig und bes Gebrauchs ber Bunge und bes ber Sande beraubt. Er war ein groß= gewachsener Mann von wilbem und hartem Aussehen und obgleich er außer seiner Gattin Niemanden um nich leiben mochte, und beständig nach ihrer Pflege verlangte, jo konnte man boch feben, daß bies nicht aus Liebe geschah, und wie unermudlich und selbstaufopfernd auch die Oberstin sich seiner Pflege weihte, so war es boch auch nicht aus Liebe, sondern burch eine an= bere wunderbare Kraft. Ihre eigene Gesundheit war nichtbarlich angegriffen und ein heftiger Krampf zog oft ihre Bruft zusammen; aber bei Nacht ober Tag. wann immer er fich etwas aufrichten wollte, ichlang er seinen Urm um ihren gebuldig gebeugten Sals. Sie ftand neben ihm und unterstütte ihn im falten Dusch= babe ber seine erstarrten Lebensträfte wieder erwecken follte, während die ihrigen dabei zu Grunde gehen. Stets war sie bereit, fest und thätig, selten sprechend, niemals klagend. Nur aus einem ichmerzlichen Buge in ihrem Antlit und ber Art und Weife, Die ihr eigen war, mit der Sand an das Berg zu faffen, konte man feben, daß fie litt. Sufanna gab zufällig auf alles Dieses Acht, und Bewundrung und Theilnahme erfüllte ihre Bruft. Bald glückte es ihr, der edlen Frau hülfreiche Sand leisten zu können, ben Kranken mit ihrem ju= gendlichstarken Urm zu ftugen und zu bewachen, wenn Die Augen der Oberstin sich mitunter vor Mübigkeit ichlossen. Glücklicherweise mochte ber Kranke sie lei= ben; fie war Zeuge bes letten traurigen Auftritts an feinem Tobtenbett. Er schien die größten Unstrengungen zu machen, um etwas zu sagen aber er vermochte es nicht. Er machte Zeichen, bag er schreiben wolle, aber seine Finger konnten bie Teber nicht halten, da malte fich heftige Unruhe in ben verzerrten Zügen, seine Gattin neigte fich über ihn indem fie mit bem Aus= brud ber fürchterlichsten Angst eine seiner Sande fagte

und flufterte. "Gib mir nur ein Zeichen als Antwort!

Sprich, o sprich! lebt er noch?

Der Kranke heftete einen stieren Blick auf sie und neigte das Haupt; war dies eine Bejahung, oder war es die Hand des Todes, die ihn am Antworten ver= hinderte? Das konnte Niemand sagen, denn sein Haupt erhob sich nicht mehr; dies war die letzte Bewegung

gewesen.

Mehre Tage und Nächte lang schien die Obristin unter häusigen Krampsanfällen dem Tode nahe zu sein. Susanna wachte beständig bei ihr, und pries sich glücklich über sie wachen und sie bedienen zu könnent; sie schien für die Frau Astrid eine leidenschaftliche Hingebung zu hegen, wie junge Mädchen sie für ältere, ausgezeichnete Frauen, zu denen sie, wie zu den Idealen ihres Geschlechts ausblicken, oft empfinden. Als die Obristin nach Norwegen zurücksehrte, küste Susanna weinend ihre kleine Hulda, fühlte sich aber dennoch glücklich einer solchen Herrin folgen, und ihr in der ländlichen Einsamkeit, wohin sie sich zurückzog, diesnen zu dürfen. Susanna reiste in die Fremde, behielt aber ihre kleine Hulda und ihren Lebensplan im Herzen.

4 Frau Astrid.

Hühltet Ihr, die schaut von ferne Allen Erdenjammer, Sterne! D ihr schautet dann wol nimmer Hin mit jo frystallnem Schimmer Wergeland.

Alls Susanna sich von Haralb und dem Haber= wasser entsernt hatte, war sie aufgeregt und schlecht= Streit u. Frieden. 1. gestimmt, aber wie sie sich dem Theile des Hauses den Frau Astrid bewohnte, näherte, ward sie stiller Sie sah zu ihren Fenstern auf und ward ihr edles aber düstres Prosil gewahr; sie war niedergebeugt und das Haupt schien wie von sinsteren Gedanken hinabgedrückt. Bei diesem Anblick vergaß Susanna ihrer eigenen Gram. "Wer sie doch, — seufzte sie — etwat glücklicher machen könnte."

Dies war Susannas tägliches Grübeln, wurde ihi aber mit jedem Tage ein dunkleres Käthsel. Frat Aftrid schien gegen Alles um sie her gleichgültig zi sein. Niemals gab sie einen Befehl in irgend einer das Hauswesen betreffenden Sache, sondern ließ Sussanna dies einrichten und führen, wie sie wollte. Sussanna war eifrigst besorgt, ihrer Psslegemutter Tisch mit allem Gutem und Leckern, das sie auftreiben konnte zu versehen, aber zu ihrer größten Verzweislung af die Obristin äußerst wenig und schien nie darauf zu merken, ob es gut ober schlecht zubereitet war.

Che Susanna in's Haus trat, pflückte sie einige der schönften Blumen, welche der Herbstfrost verschont hatte band sie zu einem Sträußchen und trat, dieses in der

Sand haltend, leise in Frau Aftrid's Zimmer.

Kummervoll — dies ist das Wort welches Fran Astrids ganzes Wesen und Sein am Besten bezeichner die kränkliche Bläße ihres edlen Antlizes, die niedergesenkten selten aufgeschlagenen Augenlider, die düstre Gleichgültigkeit, in welche ihre Seele, wie ihr Körper in die schwarze Trauertracht, eingehüllt schien, wenn sie Stundenlang in ihrem Lehnstuhl, oft ohne alle Beschäftigung, das Haupt auf die Brust niedergesenkt, saß, dies Alles befundete eine von langen Leiden schwer bedrückte Seele

Der Gram hat in Norden einen eigenen Charafter; im Süden glüht und verbrennt, im Norden stirbt man langsam, man erfriert und erstarrt nach und nach; bas

ist eine Wahrbeit die schon von uralten Zeiten her befannt ist. Alls unsere Väter ein Vild für das, was für das Schrecklichste sie im Leben hielten, suchten, da entstand die Sage von Helas unterirdischer Behausfung, von den Gräueln des Todtenusers, mit einem Wort, die Sage von der nordischen Hölle mit ihren endlosen, unbewaldeten Wüsteneien, ihrer Kälte, ihrer Finsterniß von Nebeln, zähen Fluthen, kalten, niederströpfelndem Gist, den regenschweren Wolken gleichenden Städten, den beinlosen Spukgestalten u. s. w.

Im Furientanz des griechischen Tartarus ist Leben und wilde Kraft, in seiner Raserei liegt ein gewisser Rausch, welcher den sehnsüchtigen Schmerz tiefer Unsglückseligkeit betäubt, vor seinen glühenden Schrecken bebt das Herz nicht so zurück, wie vor dem Kalten, Zähen, Tröpfelnden, welches der kalte Morden — ach!

nicht nur in der Fabel — hervorbringt.

Als Susanna in das Zimmer der Obristin trat, saß diese, wie gewöhnlich, in stille Schwermuth versun= ken. Auf einem Tische vor ihr lagen Papier und Fe= dern und ein Buch, in dem sie noch vor Kurzem ge= lesen zu haben schien. Es war die Bibel, das Buch Hiob lag aufgeschlagen da, und folgende Stellen in demselben waren unterstrichen:

"Ich begehre nicht mehr zu leben, benn meine

Tage sind nichtig."

"Der Menich ward zum Unglud, wie die Bö=

gel zum Fliegen, geboren."

Frau Aftrid's Blicke waren auf diese letten Worte ge= heftet, als Susanna leise und mit überwallendem Ser= zen sich näherte, und ihr Blumensträußchen mit einem innigen: "Ach! sein Sie so gütig!" überreichte.

Die Obristin schaute die Blumen an, und ein schmerzlicher Zug zeigte sich in ihrem Antlitze; sie wandte das Haupt ab und sagte: "sie sind schön, aber behalte sie nur Susanna; sie thun meinen Augen weh."

2 *

Sie sank barauf wieder in ihre vorige Stellung zuruck; Susanna zog sich traurig zurück, aber nach einiger Zeit wagte sie das Schweigen zu brechen, und

fagte:

"Ach! wir haben eine so prächtige Forelle gefangen, befehlen Sie sie vielleicht zu heute Mittag, Frau Obristin? Vielleicht mit einer Eiersauce? oder soll ich vielleicht eine Ente oder ein junges Huhn braten lassen?"

Thue, was Du willst, Susanna — sagte die Obristin, kurz abbrechend und gleichgültig; aber in dieser Gleichgültigkeit lag etwas so Trauriges, daß Susanna, welche sich ihr wieder genähert hatte, sich nicht enthalten konnte vor ihr nieder zu sinken, und indem sie ihre Kniee umfaßte, auszurufen:

"Ach! wenn ich Ihnen boch etwas zu Gefallen thun

fönnte!

Aber Susanna's warmer, von Hingebung strahlen= der Blick ward so finster erwiedert, daß sie unwillkür=

lich bavor zurück bebte.

"Susanna! — sagte Frau Astrid mit düstrem Ernst, indem sie ihr die Hand auf die Achsel legte, und sie sanft zurückstieß — thue mir etwas zu Gefallen: schließe Dich nicht an mich; das ist nicht gut, ich habe keine Zuneigung zu verschenken — mein Herz ist todt. Geh, mein Kind," — fuhr sie freundlicher fort — geh und kümmere Dich nicht um mich; mein Wunsch, mein einziges Angenehme ist: anist allein zu sein."

Susanna ging mit einem von schmerzlichen Empsins dungen geschwellten Herzen. "Mich nicht um sie küms mern? — sagte sie zu sich selbst, indem sie eine Thräne trocknete — mich nicht um sie zu kümmern? Gerade

als ob bas sich etwa nur fo machen ließe!"

Nachbem Susanna sich entfernt hatte, warf Frau Aftrid einen melancholischen Blick auf das vor ihr liegende Papier; sie nahm die Feder, und legte sie wieder

bin; sie schien bei dem Gedanken dieselbe zu gebrauchen unwillig zu werden, doch that sie es endlich und

ichrieb folgenden Brief:

"Sie wollen, daß ich Ihnen schreibe — wohlan, "es sei! aber was — was soll ich Ihnen sagen? "Ich danke Ihnen, mein väterlicher Freund, mein "Jugendlehrer, für Ihren Brief, danke Ihnen "dafür, daß Sie meine Seele kräftigen und aufswichten wollen! Aber ich bin alt, niedergebeugt, "ermattet, erbittert, und recht schlimm; in meinem "Busen wohnt keine Kraft, kein Leben mehr; es "ist zu spät, mein Freund — zu spät!

"Sie wollen meinen Blick gen Himmel erhe= "ben, aber was nütt der Glanz der Sonne dem "Auge, das nicht mehr sieht? welche Macht ha= "ben die Töne über das Ohr des Tauben? Was "ist alles Gute und Schöne auf der Welt für "ein erstorbenes, ein in langer und harter Ge=

"fangenschaft versteinertes Berg?

"D. mein Freund ich bin Ihres Trostes, Ihrer "lindernden Worte unwürdig, meine Seele wider= "strebt ihnen und wirft sie von sich, als "Worte, "Worte nichts als Worte," "welche Jahrtausende "lang schön und erhaben klangen, während Tau=

"sende von Seelen trostlos verstummten.

"Hoffen! — Ich habe so lange gehofft, ich "habe so oft zu mir selbst gesagt: bessere Tage "werden kommen! Die Bahn der Pflicht führt zu "den Wohnungen des Friedens, des Lichts, wenn "ne auch noch so dornenvoll ist, wandle sie nur "muthig, müder Pilgrim, schreite vorwärts und "Du wirst das gelobte Land betreten! Und ich "bin gegangen — die endlosen, schweren Tage "über dreißig Jahre lang, gegangen, aber der "Weg dehnt sich immer weiter und weiter hinaus "— meine Hoffnungen sind verwelkt, eine nach

"der anderen erstorben, und noch immer sehe ich

"fein Ziel, als im Grabe!"

"Lieber! Lieber! — o, wenn Sie mußten, welche "unfäglich bitteren Empfindungen biefes Wort in "mir erweckt! habe ich nicht geliebt — heiß unt "innig geliebt? und welche Früchte hat mir meine "Liebe getragen? Sie hat mein Berg gebrochen "und den Gegenstand meiner Liebe unglücklich "gemacht. Umsonst wollen sie einen Glauben, ber "in mir fefte Wurzeln geschlagen hat, befampfen. "Ich glaube, daß es zum Unglück geborene Men-"schen, die verdammt sind Allen, welche sich ih-"nen nähern, Unheil zu bringen, gibt, und ich "glaube, daß ich zu ihnen gehöre. Laffen Sie "mich daher die Menschen fliehen, und allen Ge-"fühlen welche mich an nie ketten könnten, entsa-"gen. Warum foll ich noch mehr Unheil an-"ftiften, als bereits burch mich geschehen ift."

"Warum forberten Sie mich zum Schreiben "auf? Ich will meine Bitterkeit nicht in eines "Andern Herz träufeln, ich will Niemandem weh

"thun, und — was habe ich gethan?

"Es zieht ein stummer Streit durch die Welt, "der in der verschlossenen Menschenbrust geführt "wird, er ist mitunter entsetlich. Es ist der "Streit mit bitteren und schlimmen Gedanken, "und diese treten oft in Worten, welche mit Feuer "und Blut geschrieben werden, hervor; sie wer"den dann vor dem Richterstuhle gelesen und ver"dammt, aber in mancher Brust rasen sie Jahre "lang im Verborgenen, da werden nach und nach "Gesundheit, Laune, Liebe, Glauben, ja Glauben "an Leben und an einen gütigen Gott unter"graben, und mit diesen stürzt Alles zusammen."

"Könnte ich glauben, daß mein unterwürfiger, "treuer Wandel an der Seite des Gatten, den

"ich einst so sehr liebte, um bessentwillen ich in "der Festung, deren Kommandant er war, ein "Leben hinschleppte, gegen welches das des Bau"gesangenen angenehm ist, dem ich getreulich folgte,
"selbst als ich ihn späterhin nicht mehr liebte,
"weil er meiner bedurste, weil er ohne mich ein=
"sam, sinsteren Geistern überlassen, weil es Recht
"und Pflicht war, weil ich es im Angesichte des
"Ewigen gelobt hatte — o könnte ich glauben,
"daß alle diese Treue wohlthuend wirkte, daß
"meine Beschwerden irgend einen Nutzen geschasst
"haben — dann würde ich nicht, wie ich es jetzt
"thue, fragen: Warum ward ich geboren? wozu
"habe ich gelebt? — Aber nichts! nichts!

"Könnte ich glauben, daß ich jenseits des Gra=
"bes meiner einzigen Schwester milden, liebevol=
"len Blick wieder fände, dann würde ich dem
"Tode freudig entgegen gehen. Aber was soll ich
"ihr antworten, wenn sie mich nach ihrem Schmer=
"zenskinde fragt? Wie wird sie auf die ungetreue

"Pflegerin blicken?

"D mein Freund, mein Unglück ist kein Ro"manenunglück, es gehört nicht zu denen, welche
"den helleren Tagen nur als tieferer Schatten
"dienen; es ist eine langwierige Winterdämmerung,
"die nur zu einer sinstereren Nacht sührt. Und
"bin ich denn wohl die einzige? Schlagen Sie
"das Buch der Geschichte auf! blicken Sie um
"sich, suchen Sie die Gegenwart, und zu Tausen"den werden sich Leidende, unverschuldet Leidende,
"die nach langer Qual verzweiselnd von dannen
"gehen, Ihren Blicken darbieten. Aber empor zu
"einem anderen, zu einem glücklicheren Leben.
"Einziger Trost, einzige Hossnung, einziger, wahr"hafter Lichtpunkt in der Nacht des Erdenlebens!
"— Nein! nein! von dir will ich nicht lassen!

"auf Dich will ich bauen, und in diesem Glauben "das oft sich erhebende Murren gegen den Welten=

"ichöpfer ersticken."

"Ich bin frank, und ich glaube, baß ich biesen "Winter nicht überleben werde. Das Athemholen "fällt mir schwer, und vielleicht trägt biese Qual "zu ber unaussprechlichen, schweren Angst, Die "auf mir liegt, bei. Wenn ich in ben laugen, "schlaflosen Nächten mich in meinem Bette auf= "setze und in die Nacht um mich, vor mir und "in mir sebe, umgeben mich finstere grausige Phan= "tasieen, und da scheint es mir oft, als ob die "Milgsucht mit ben aschgrauen Wangen, ben ftie-"ren, glafernen Blicken mir nahe meinen Verftanb "umnebeln und meine Sinne verwirren wolle. "Wie fann ich noch zu leben wünschen? Wenn ..es Albend ist, muniche ich, es ware wieder Mor= "gen, und wenn ber Morgen anbricht, jo muniche ..ich, ber Tag wäre schon zu Ende und ber Abend "fei ba. Jebe Stunde ift mir eine Laft, eine "Qual.

"Darum, mein Freund! beten Sie für mich zu "Gott, daß ich bald sterben möge! Leben Sie "wohl! Vielleicht schreibe ich nimmermehr, aber "mein letzter heller Gedanke wird auf Sie ge"richtet sein. Verzeihen Sie die Ungeduld, die "Bitterkeit, welche dieser Brief verräth. Beten "Sie für mich, mein Freund und Lehrer, beten "Sie, daß ich mich beruhigen, und, ehe ich sterbe, wieder beten kann!"

Mene Streitigkeiten.

Wir leben in gar eigner Beit, Dit Ernsteswort und Ernstesftreit.

Wir laffen jest die bleiche Frau Aftrid mit ihren finsteren Gebanken allein und werden von einem eigen= thumlichen Lärmen veranlagt, uns in bem

Brauhause

umzuseben. Sarald hatte sich bafelbit eingefunden um bas neugebraute Bier, in bessen Verfertigung Susanne Meisterin war, zu schmecken, nachdem er aber einen tüchtigen Schluck zu sich genommen hatte, sagte er mit einer schrecklichen Grimaffe: "Taugt nichts! taugt gar nichts!"

Etwas beleidigt antwortete Susanne: "Dielleicht behaupten Sie auch, bag bas Braurecept ber Frau Lan=

besbauptmännin Rosenhielm nichts taugt!"

"Versteht sich, behaupte ich das; es ist boch bie, welche die Raffeegesellschaften gibt? Eine Raffeeschwester ift immer eine ichlechte Saushalterin, und ba bie Lanbesbauptmännin Rosenhjelm eine Raffeeschwester ift, fo-

"Erlauben Sie mir zu fagen," rief Sufanna heftig, "baß es unanständig und gottlos von Ihnen ift, auf Diese Weise von einem so vortrefflichen Frauenzimmer, einer jo hoben Person zu reben!"

"Hoch! Wie hoch ist sie benn ohngefähr?" "Biel höher als Sie sind, ober jemals werben, so

viel kann ich Ihnen fagen."

"Sober als ich? Da gebt fie gewiß auf Stelzen. Run, bas, muß ich fagen, ift bie mahre Sohe bes Bor= nehmthuns und ber Gefallsucht; Raffeegefellichaften zu geben und sich sein und prächtig zu kleiden, das ist bei einem Frauenzimmer noch verzeihlich, aber auf Stelzen zu gehen, und lediglich um höher zu sein als alle Ansbern und über deren Köpfe wegsehen zu können, das ist zu stark! Wie kann eine so hohe Person sich so weit herablassen, gutes Bier zu brauen? Eine Schwedin kann kein gutes Bier brauen; denn —"

"Sie soll auch für Sie keinen einzigen Tropfen brauen, abscheulicher Norweger, ohne Vernunft, ohne Geschmack,

ohne Verstand, ohne -"

Und hinaus flog Susanna im hestigsten Zorne aus dem Brauhause, indem sie einen Becher Bier, den Harald während des Streites für sich eingeschenkt hatte, den er aber, wenn er sich nicht durch einen Satz gerettet, über sich bekommen hätte, umstieß.

Am Abend besselben Tages sehen wir die Streitenden

auf bem

Boben

zusammentreffen.

"Sind Sie noch bose?" fragte Harald scherzhaft, ins dem er den Kopf durch die Bodenthüre steckte; Susanna faß mit dem ganzen Gewicht und der Würde einer ächsten Speisekammerregentin auf einer Mehlkiste wie auf einem Throne, und hielt ein Scepter von den weltbekannten Wurstkräutern, Thomian, Majoran und Bastlikenkraut, welches sie in kleine Bündel vertheilte, in der Hand, indem sie prüfende Blicke in ihrem wohlgeordneten Reiche um sich her warf.

Die Brotkasten strotten von den neugebackenen Haferbröten, sette Würste und Schinken, so wie auch große Bunde getrockneter Fische hingen von der Decki herab, Körbe mit allerlei Grünwaaren standen au

ihren Brettern u. s. w. u. s. w.

Harald sah mit Kennerblicken umher und sagte, obschon er aut seine Frage noch keine Antwort erhalten hatte: "So viel ist gewiß, daß ich noch keinen beffer ge= ordneten und gefüllten Boben gesehen habe."

Sufanna wollte auch feine Spur von bem Bergnu-

gen, welches fie über biefes Lob empfand, zeigen.

"Aber — fuhr Harold fort — Sie muffen auch einsgesteben, daß es keiner großen Künste bedarf, Boden und Keller so zu bestellen, wenn ein Land so reich an allen Lebensgütern ist, wie unser Norwegen.

Theueres Land mit erhabenen Bergen, Fruchtbaren Thälern und fischreichem Meer! -"

"Wir haben Gottlob! in Schweden auch Fische" — antwortete Susanna trocken.

"Sie können sie aber nicht mit den unsrigen versgleichen. Oder wollen Sie im Ernste Ihre Barsche und Platzen gegen unser Gewimmel von Makrelen, Härinsen, Dorschen, Flundern, gegen alle unsere unermeßlichen Fischschaaren in Anschlag bringen?"

"Alle Ihre norwegischen Fischarten schenke ich für

einen einzigen ehrlichen schwedischen Becht meg."

"Secht?" gibt es wirklich in Schweben nichts Anderes, als Sechte?"

"In Schweden gibt es alle Arten Fische, die man in Norweg findet, und obendrein weit größer und fetter."

"Ja, dann kommen sie von unseren Küsten. Wir fangen, was wir gebrauchen, das Übrige lassen wir nach Schweden schwimmen, damit sie da unten doch auch etwas haben. Aber ich vergesse, daß ich selbst hinaus will, und kleine Fische, große Fische, viele Fische fangen will. Adieu, Mamsell Susanna! Bald komme ich mit Fischen zurück!"

"Um Besten thun Sie, Sie bleiben bei Ihren nor=

wegischen Fischen!" — rief ihm Sufanna nach.

Harald blieb aber nicht bei den Fischen; am nächsten Morgen sehen wir ihn Susannen nach der

Milchfammer

"Ich sehe Ihnen an, daß wir heute Mittag Bollen milch, eines unserer köstlichsten National= und meir

Leibgericht bekommen."

"Pah! Man kann ganz angst und matt zu Mutl werden, wenn man nur an Eure Nationalgerichte denkt Aber noch unangenehmer, noch unnatürlicher, als Eur-Bollenmilch ist das scheußliche Gekoch: Fruchtsuppe mi kleinen Häringen."

"Fruchtsuppe mit Häringen? Das ist die herrlichste Speise auf Erden, ein Gericht, das ich ein christlichet

nennen möchte."

. "Und ich möchte es ein heidnisches nennen, das kein ordentlicher Christenmensch effen kann."

"Es wird aber seit Urväterzeiten von freien Norme:

gern in Norwegens ichonen Thalern gegeffen."

"Das beweist, daß ihr freien Norweger noch Geiden seid." "Und ich will Ihnen beweisen, daß die Norweger früher Christen waren, als die Schweden."

"Beweisen können Sie, so viel Sie wollen, aber ich

glaube es boch nicht."

"Aber ich will es Ihnen gedruckt zeigen."

"Dann ift es gang zuverläffig ein Druckfehler."

Harald lachte und sagte etwas von der Unmöglich= keit, mit "schwedischen Frauenzimmern" zu diskutiren.

Sollte sich vielleicht Jemand darüber wundern, wie es zugeht, daß Harald sich mit Susanna im Brauhaus, auf dem Boden und in der Milchkammer zusammen sins det, so können wir darauf nur antworten, daß er ein großer Liebhaber von Bier, Mehl und Milch oder auch von einem gewissen Kraut in der Alltagssuppe des Lesbens, das — Neckerei heißt, sein mußte.

Die Obristin frühstückte immer auf ihrem Zimmer, zu Mittag aber aß sie mit Harald und Susanna zus sammen und sah diese Beiden auch mitunter eine Stunde

bes Albends bei sich.

Beim Mittagstisch brach oft der Streit in den schwedischen und norwegischen Angelegenheiten aus, denn die kleinste Ursache reichte hin, die Bürgermeisterstochter sich blind in den Streit für ihr Vaterland stürzen zu lassen, und merkwürdig genug schien Frau Astrid selbst sich daran zu ergößen, ihn anzuschüren, indem sie eine und die andere Frage auswarf, wie z. B.:

"Ich möchte wohl wissen, ob der Blumenkohl in Norwegen besser ist, als in Schweden?" oder: "ich möchte erfahren, ob wohl das Korn in Schweden besser

ift, als in Norwegen?"

"Gewiß in Norwegen!" sagte Harald.

"Gang gewiß in Schweben!" rief Sufanna.

Auf diese Weise wurde über Grünwaaren, Fische, Münze und Maaß und Gewicht gesprochen und disputirt.

Von dem norwegischen Korne sagte Susanna: "Ich habe auf dem ganzen Gute noch keinen einzigen Halm gesehen, der sich mit dem, was ich in Schweden gesehen habe, messen kann."

"Das kommt bavon — fagte Haralb — baß Sie

früher nie gutes Rorn gefeben haben."

Von dem norwegischen Gewicht sagte Susanna: "Ich kann mich in euer garstiges, unregelmäßiges Gewicht nicht finden."

"Es dürfte boch wohl gewichtiger sein als das schwe-

bijche," antwortete Sarald.

Wenn bann Susanna recht eifrig und böse wurde, so lachte — horribile dictu! — Harald von ganzem Herzen, und mitunter erhellte ein schwaches Lächeln sogar Frau Astrid's bleiches Antlit; aber es glich einem Sonnenblick an einem düsteren Novemberhimmel, der blos erscheint, um sich wieder in Wolken zu hüllen.

Bei solchen Gelegenheiten dachte Susanna gar nicht daran, die "Barb'ralaune" zu zügeln. Sie hielt es für eine heilige Pflicht, auf solche Art ihr Vaterland zu

vertheibigen.

Aber nicht immer herrschte ber Geist bes Zwiste zwischen Sarald und Sufanna; mitunter begrüßte auch der Geift des Friedens, wie eine scheue, zum schnelle Weiterfluge fertige Taube. Wenn fich Sufanna 31 weilen über bas ausließ, was in ben innerften Tiefe ibres Herzens lebte, über bie Liebe zu ihrer fleine Schwester, Die Erinnerung an ihr Zusammenleben, üb Die Sehnsucht, fie wieder zu feben, und, wie eine Du ter für ihr Rind, für fie zu beten; bann hörte B rald immer aufmerksam und schweigend zu. Kein Spot gelächter, fein neckendes Wort tafteten Dieje reinen Bi ber in Susannens Seele an. Und wie malte Susan nicht der fleinen Sulda Schönheit aus: bas fleine, wei Rind, jo zart und weich wie Baumwolle, die fromme blauen Augen, Die kleinen, weißen Bahne, Die, wenn lachte, hervorschimmerten, ber helle Sonnenschein a ihrem Gesichte, die goldenen, so lieblich um Stirne u: Sals sich ringelnden Locken, die kleinen, jugen Sändche und ihr Geift, ihr lebhaftes, gutes, liebendes Berg! fie war in Wahrheit ein Engel bes himmels! I tleine Rammer, welche Susanna mit ihrer Hulba k wohnte, und bie fie aus einem ungesunden Schmu winkel in ein behagliches Zimmer, bessen Tapeten selbst malte, verwandelt hatte, Diese schilderte fie a bem Gebächtniß, und auch wie Rlein-Gulba's Bett v einem hellblauen Muffelinumhang umgeben war, v sich gegen Morgen ein Sonnenstrahl in das Zimm stahl, um bas Ropffiffen zu bestrahlen und ihr lodic Haupt zu fuffen. Wie schelmisch war die Kleine nic wenn Sufanna bes Abends fpat in bie Stube tr um zu Bett zu geben, und ihr erfter Blick auf t Bett, in welchem ihr Liebling lag, fiel. Aber fie i bas Rind nicht, benn Sulba stedte ihr Röpfden unt Die Riffen, um sich vor ber Schwester zu verberg Susanna stellte sich bann, als ob sie sie suche, brauce aber nur mit besorgter Stimme zu fragen: "Ach Gc

wo ist benn meine kleine Hulba?" um das Haupt der Kleinen wieder hervorzulocken, ihre ausgestreckten Arme zu sehen, und sie rusen zu hören: "Hier bin ich, Sanna! Hier ist deine kleine Hulda!" — Dann war Susanna mit ihrem kleinen Liebling im Arme glücklich, und versgaß alle Betrübnisse und Lasten des Tages.

Bei ber Erinnerung an Diese Zeit strömten Susanna's Thränen gar oft, und verhinderten fie, den feuchten Glanz, ber mitunter dabei in Haralds Augen aufstieg,

zu bemerken.

Aber auch Harald hatte Mittheilungen, welche, wenn auch nicht von so zarter Natur, doch so interessant waren, daß sie Susanna's Ausmerksamkeit auf das Höchste in Anspruch nahmen, und uns veranlassen, zugleich zu einem neuen Kapitel überzugehen.

6.

Die Abendstunden.

Ich mag das Leben, das sich frastig rühret Im Mühlgeklapver, in des Hammers Schlag, Ich weich dem Fuhrmann, welcher Bretter führet, Ich weiß, er wirket für ein nühlich Fach, Doch wenn vor lauter Klivp - klavv man nicht spüret Den Glockenruf zu der Gedanken Feiertag, So heißt das geistleer nur zum Schein gelebet, Wo sinnlos man den Fuß zum Lanze hebet.

Foff.

Harald erzählte gern und gut (eine schöne und angenehme Gabe, welche man in Norwegen oft, in allen Ständen, sowohl bei Männern als auch bei Frauen trifft, und welche sie von ihren Bätern, ben Skalden, geerbt zu haben scheinen), war überdies in den Gebirgsregionen, deren Naturmerkwürdigkeiten und Le

genden wohlbewandert.

Und gerade aus den Gebirgsgegenden find in Mor wegen, als aus beffen Herzen, die schönften Blume ber Bolkspoeste aufgeblüht. Die Zeiten ber Sage un ber heidnischen Jahrhunderte haben hier ihre Riesen spuren zurückgelaffen: Flüsse und Berge haben ihr Traditionen von Spukgestalten und Metamorphosen, bi Riefenkeffel tonen in ben Bergen und Bautafteine er heben sich über die Rämpen, Die ihre Sufte umgurte ten, und im Streit und Zweikampf fielen. Bom Sal lingsthale ging ber norwegische Volks=Polska, ber Sal linger, aus, und nur bie Harbangergeige kann beffe wilden, wunderlichen Rhythmen richtig wiedergeben. Ar herrlichsten sind die Blüthen der Erinnerung, welch die christliche Vorzeit gebar, und der ewige Schnee au ben Kuppen der Urberge ist nicht unvergänglicher, al beren unschuldige Rosen an ihrem Fuße. So lang be Gaufta fteht und ber Riuka feinen Donnergefanfingt, wird Mariaftieg genannt, und feine Sager voll Freud und Leid erzählt werden; fo lang Folge fonds Gismeer über feinen ftummen, dufteren Bebeim nissen *) ruht, so lange wird sich das kleine Eiland welches, der Sage nach, ewig von Zähren treuer Lieb genett wird, mit Grun befleiben.

Wie dem auch sei — Diejenigen, welche Dichtunger und Sagen mit ihrem eignen Leben schreiben, welch die Tiefe des Daseins in der stillen aber mächtiger Sprache der Handlungen aussprechen, sie sind die wirk

^{*)} Mehre Ortschaften mit den Sitten Scdom's wurden, der Sagnach, unter dem gigantischen Leichentuch begraben, und noch soll man der Hahn unter der Schneedecke frähen hören. Wenn die Sonne über den Fond scheint, glaubt man Schwärme unzähliger fleiner Bögel von aller Farben, weißer, schwarzer, grüner, gelber und rother, die über dem Schneemeer auf und niederschweben, zu erblicken. Man glaubte in früherer Zeiten, daß es die Seelen der ruchlosen Bewohner des Thales wären welche hier als Bogelschattengestalten umherschwärmten. s. Fage.

lichen Verfasser, die ersten Skalden auf der Erde. Die welche berichten, was jene erlebt haben, stehen erst

in ber zweiten Rangordnung.

Nach vollbrachtem Lagewerk, und wenn sich Frau Aftrid wieder nach einer leichten Abendmahlzeit auf ihr Zimmer zurückgezogen hatte, war es Haralds größtes Vergnügen Susannen, während sie nähte oder ihr Spinn=rad oft im raschen Wetteifer mit Laxina und Karina schürren ließ, und das Feuer auf den Eisenplatten tanzte, und seine warmen und traulichen Lichter auf die Dassitzenden warf, Geschichten vorzulesen, oder zu erzählen.

Harald bildete sich unendlich viel darauf ein, Sufanna zur Zuhörerin zu haben, bei seinen bald munteren, bald traurigen Erzählungen ihren Ausruf kindlichen Erschreckens und Erstaunens, oder ihr herzliches Lachen zu vernehmen, oder ihre Thränen fließen zu

jehen.

Welchen tiefen Einbruck machte nicht bie Sage von Mariaftieg, bem Pfab über bas Gebirge, am Ranbe des Rjuka = Wafferfallabgrundes, über den noch heute Die Wandrer mit Beben ichreiten, und ben ein junges, vom Muth ber Liebe geleitetes Madchen, auffand, auf Sujannens Empfindungen. Diesen Bfab manbelte bes Westfiorthals schone Maria mit leichten und sicheren Schritten ihrem Jugenbfreunde und Geliebten, Giftein Salfvordsen entgegen, aber ihres Baters niedriger Beig trennte Die Beiben, und von Mariens Bitten und Thränen bewegt, mußte Giftein vor eines hinterliftigen Nebenbuhlers Mordanfall flieben. Jahre vergingen und Maria war beständig und treu; ihr Bater ftarb, Eiftein batte nich burch Tapferfeit und Ebelmuth feinen fruheren Feind zum Freunde gemacht, und bie Liebenben follten nach langer Trennung einander wiederseben um nie wieder von einander zu laffen. Giftein eilte auf bem fürzeften Wege seinem geliebten Dlabchen ent= gegen. Lange hatte fie feiner geharrt - fie fah ihn Streit u. Frieden. I

kommen, und sein Name entsuhr mit einem Freuder ruf ihren Lipven — er erblickte sie — leidenschaftdurch glüht streckte er ihr seine Arme, gleichsam seine gan; Seele entgegen, aber er vergaß, daß er keine Schwinge hatte. Er stürztes von der Höhe, und der Rjuka bi

Noch viele Jahre später wanderte täglich eine bleich Gestalt, in deren schönen Zügen sich ein stiller Wahn sinn malte, den Marienstieg; dort neigte sie sich übe den Wasserfall, und schien mit Jemandem unten in de Tiese zu sprechen. Mit wehmüthiger Freude im Augkam sie jedesmal von dieser Wanderung zurück, un sagte zu den Ihrigen in der Hütte: "Jest habe ic mit ihm gesprochen, er hat mich gebeten jeden Tag zikommen, und ihm zu sagen, wie ich lebe. Es wär eine Sünde, wenn ich ihm dies abschlüge, er ist so gur und liebt mich gar so treuinnig."
So ging sie noch, als ihr das Silberhaar im Wind

So ging sie noch, als ihr das Silberhaar im Wind um das runzelvolle Gesicht flatterte, so ging sie bi eine barmherzige Stimme die mude Wanderin zun Himmelspfad zu Ruhe und Freude in den Armen de

Geliebten emporrief.

Minder traurig, aber für Sufanna eben fo interef

fant, war bie alte Sage von Halgrim.

"Der schwarze Tod hatte in Morweg gewüthet, uni mehr als zwei Drittheile der Bevölkerung hinwegge rafft, ganze Landstrecken und große, volkreiche Kirch spiele verwüstet. In Uldvigsthal in Hardanger war ein junger Bauer, Namens Halgrim, von allen dor Wohnenden der einzige am Leben Gebliebene. Er stant vom Krankenlager, auf dem er rings vom Tode um geben schmachtete, auf und suchte — lebende Men schen.

Es war im Frühling, die Lerche sang hoch oben in der klaren, blauen Luft, die Birkenhaine kleideten sich mit zartem Grün, die Bäche schlängelten sich brausend

mit schmelzenden Schneestreifen von ben Bergen her= nieber, aber fein Pflug burchzog bie erweichte Erbe, und von den Sohen horte man fein Sorn die Rube zum Futter rufen, Alles war ftumm und tobt in ber Behausung ber Menschen. Halgrim wanderte von Thal zu Thal, von Hütte zu Hütte, überall starrte ihm der Tod entgegen, und er erkannte bie Leichen früherer Freunde und Bekannten. Da glaubte er, er mare ein= fam in ber Welt. Berzweiflung bemächtigte fich feiner Seele, und er beschloß gleichfalls zu fterben; als er aber eben im Begriff ftand fich von einem Berge gu fturgen, sprang sein treuer Hund empor, schmeichelte ihm und winselte in der ausdrucksvollen Sprache der Angst. Halgrim hielt inne, und trat vom Rande bes Abgrun= bes zurud; er umarmte feinen Sund, feine Thranen rannen, die Verzweiflung wich aus feinem erweichten Bergen, und er begann feine Wanderung von Neuem. Die Erinnerung an feine Liebe führte ihn zum Kirch= fpiel Graven, wo er zuerst Silbegunden fennen und lieben gelernt hatte.

Es war Abend, und die Sonne neigte sich zum Untergange, als Halgrim in ein Thal kam, wo Alles eben
so stumm und todt war, als in denjenigen, welche er bisher durchwandelt hatte. Düster standen die Föhren in
den schwarzen Schatten der Bergwand, und still floß
der Strom zwischen den öden Usern. Am anderen
User sprang eine kleine Landzunge mit laubiger Waldung in die blauen Wogen hinaus, und auf den hellgrünen Birkenzapsen spielten die letzten Strahlen der

Sonne.

Plötzlich kam es Halgrim vor, als ob ein leichter Rauch über dem Walde sichtbar würde; er traute seinen Augen nicht; athemlos starrte er nach dieser Gesgend hin. Es währte nur einen Augenblick, so wirsbelte eine bläuliche Rauchsäule leise in die stille Abendsluft empor. Mit einem Freudenschrei stürzte Halgrim

3 *

vorwärts, watete durch das Wasser, und stand ball am jenseitigen User. Bellend und wedelnd sprang ihn sein Hund voraus bis zur Hütte, von welcher der Rauch emporstieg. Auf dem Heerde brannte hell das Feuer, und ein junges Mädchen trat in die Thüre—ein zweiter Freudenschrei, und Halgrim und Hildegunds lagen einander in den Armen. Auch Hildegunde war nach dem grausigen Besuch des schwarzen Todes allein in ihrem Thale übrig geblieben.

Am Tage darauf gingen sie, wie sie übereingekommen waren, in die Kirche, und da sich kein Priester, der sie einsegnen, kein Mensch der als Zeuge ihrer Verbindung dienen konnte, fand, traten sie Beide vor Gottes Altar, legten die Hände ineinander, wobei Halgrim mit feierlicher Stimme sagte: "Im Namen Gotztes des Vaters, des Sohnes, des heiligen Geistes!—"

Und Gott segnete die in seinem Namen geschlossene Verbindung; diesem glücklichen Paar entstammten Geschlechter, welche jene Gegenden auf's Neue bevölkerten und die Namen: Halgrim und Hildegunde sind noch immer im Munde der Bewohner.

Durch Harald ward Susanna auch mit den Sagen von Norwegs Königen, mit 'Olof Haraldsen's des Bluttäusers, mit des edleren Olof Trhggvesons Thaten bekannt, mit Bewundrung hörte sie von König Sverre mit dem kleinen Körper und dem großen, wahrhaft königlichen Geiste reden, Es schmeichelte auch ihrer weiblichen Gitelkeit, Frauen eine so bedeutende Rolle in der ältesten norwegischen Geschichte spielen zu sehen, wie die stolze Freibauern = Tochter Gyda, die Ursache von Harald Haarfagers Heldenthaten, der zuerst Norwegen zu einem Königreich machte, und obgleich die Verbrechen der "Königsmutter Gunild" ihr Abscheu einflößten, freute es sie doch, eine Frau durch geistiges

Mebergewicht sieben Könige beherrschen und ihre Sand=

lungen bestimmen zu seben.

Düstrere Bilder zeigten die Bürgerkriege, welche Blutfturm auf Blutsturm das Land durchtoben ließen, in denen es endlich seine Freiheit verblutete.

Die Erdbeere blühet jett im Schutt der ehemaligen Burgen, und auf den blutüberschwemmten Feldern wach= sen goldene Saaten, wie "Narben über die verharsch=

ten Wunden."

Ein sanfteres Geschlecht steht auf dem Boden des "Blutbeils" und blickt klar und hoffnungsvoll in die Zukunft, während es doch noch gern aus seinen stillen schönen Thälern den Erinnerungen aus der Vorzeit lauscht.

"Und auf den Hügeln steht der alte Stein, Wo mit der Morgenrothe, ichwarzbeschwingt, Die Sage schwebt, wie eine Sangeslerche."

Ein Gegenstand der Unterhaltung und des Streites war auch für Harald und Susanna ihre Dame, die bleiche Obristin. Sobald die Rede von ihr war, ward Harald sehr ernst, und auf Susanna's Fragen, was er über sie wisse, antwortete er nur: "sie soll sehr unsglücklich gewesen sein." Wenn ihn aber Susanna mit Fragen über dieses Unglück, worin es bestanden habe? ob man ihr nicht irgendwie helsen könne? u. s. w. (denn zu diesem Zwecke wäre sie durch die ganze Welt gegangen) bestürmte, erzählte Harald ihr — eine Gesichichte.

Erzählungen von Frauen, die in ihren Thälern mächtig und merkwürdig waren, sind in Norwegen nichts Seltenes. Man kennt die Geschichte von der Frau im Hallingthale, welche die "Roppefrau" genannt wurde, und so reich war, daß sie mit Elennthieren fuhr, man hat die Geschichte von der reichen Frau Belju (gleichfalls im Hallingthal) welche die "Näskirche" baute, und

vermittelst Feuer und Butter die Bajaklippe sprenger ließ, so daß man daselbst einen Weg anlegen konnte der noch heute Smör=Klev (Butterklippe) genann wird; man erzählt ferner von der Solbergsfrau unt der Schönthalsfrau, und ihrem großen Zwist wegen eines Schweines, und von dem falschen Eid, den eine der Beiden deshalb vor Gericht schwor; und von diesen Frauen geht die Sage, daß der Priester nicht eher, als die mächtige Frau in die Kirche getreten war, läuten lassen durfte.

Man kennt ferner bie Geschichte von Ritter Knut Feuerhirn's Gattin, die aus Gram über ihrer fieben Söhne ruchlosen Lebenswandel sich von der Welt zu= ruckzog und sich in einem Thale, wo sie burch Fasten und Almosenspenden ihrer Sohne Migethaten zu fühnen suchte, niederließ, und so hat man noch viele Geschichten der Art; aber eine solche wie harald Susannen von Frau Astrid erzählte, war in Norwegens Thälern noch nie erhört worden. Es kam barin fo viel Wun= berbares und Schaubererregendes vor, daß die leicht= gläubige Sufanna, welche mahrend ber Erzählung immer bleicher und bleicher ward, vor Grausen erstarrt ware, wenn nicht, gerade bei bem ichrecklichsten Bunkte ber Katastrophe, eine plöpliche Ahnung bei ihr aufge= fliegen ware, daß sie sich nur vor einer Fabel so febr entsette. Saralbe Aussehen, wenn er feine Vermuthung äußerte, erhob biese Ahnung zur Gewißheit, und bas bergliche Gelächter, mas er bei ihren Ausrufungen und Vorwürfen aufschlug, machte, bag fie im höchsten Borne aufsprang, und ihn verließ, indem fie betheuerte, fie würde ihn nie mehr um etwas befragen, nie mehr ein Wort von allem Dem, was er fagte, glauben.

Dies hielt sie auch bis — zum nächsten Male; benn wenn Harald ihr versprach, die völlige Wahrheit in Hinsicht auf die Geschichte der Obristin zu sagen, da ließ sich Susanna immer wieder auf's Neue hinter's

Licht führen; sie lauschte, erblaßte, weinte, bis bie gesteigerten Wunder ber Erzählung wiederum ihren Verdacht erweckten, sich wie vor Rurzem auflößten, und machten, daß Barbara wieder aufstand, zankte, brobte, zornig die Thur hinter sich zuschlug — und Harald lachte.

In einer Sache aber stimmten Haralb und Susanna volltommen überein, und das mar: ihrer Dame, jeder in seinem Tache, mit bem größten Gifer zu bienen; bies war die Ursache, daß sie, ohne es sich selbst recht zu gestehen, immer mehr Achtung vor einander befamen, welches sie aber auf keinerlei Weise hinderte, er Die Schweden und sie die Norweger tapfer anzugreifen und zu verläumden.

So vergingen unter abwechselndem Streit und Waf= fenstillstand die Herbstmonate unbemerkt mit ihren bun= felnden Tagen und der zunehmenden Ralte, und die Zeit kam, wo muhfame Beichäftigungen bie Muße ber Frauenzimmer sowohl in großen als in kleinen Woh= nungen in Beschlag nahmen, die Zeit bes Lichts und ber Torten, bes Tanges, Spieles und ber Kinderfreude, mit einem Wort.

7.

Die Weihnachtzeit.

Rommet, ihr froben beschwingeten Rleinen, Korntische laden euch ein bei ben Scheunen, Weibnacht ift nab. Schon winft euch ba Butter von goldigen, brotichweren Salmen. Bierreagarb.

Die Conne foll den gangen Erdfreis beleuchten und erwarmen, darum freut fich auch die Erde bei Jener Unfunft. Der Königespiegel.

Gott sei Dank für bie Sonne! So mancher Freund, jo manche Freude ichwindet und mahrend ber Wande=

rung burch bas Erbenleben, bie Sonne bleibt getreulich, und leuchtet und wärmt uns von der Wiege bis zum Grabe. Die Sonne vereint Seiben und Chriften zu gemeinsamer Anbetung, indem fie Beiber Bergen gu bem Gotte, welcher bie Sonne geschaffen hat, empor= hebt. So trifft auch bas größte jährliche Fest bes nor= bischen Seiden = mit dem des Christenthums zu der Jahreszeit, wo die Sonne gleichsam neu für die Erde geboren wird und ihre vorher abnehmende Rraft jest zunimmt, zusammen. Mit großer Gemüthlichkeit wird Dies Fest in den standinavischen Reichen gefeiert. Nicht nur im Saufe ber Reichen brennen Freudenfeuer und tont das Freudengeschrei der Kinder: auch aus der nie= brigften Butte schallt Jubel, in ben Gefängniffen wird es licht und die Armen schmecken Überfluß. Auf dem Lande stehen jedem Wandrer die Thuren offen und der Tisch ist für ihn gedeckt. In mehren Gegenden Nor= wegs braucht ber Reisende in ben Gasthäusern nichts für Koft und Nachtlager zu bezahlen. Es ift eine Zeit, wo die Erde die Wahrheit ber himmelsworte: Geben ift feliger benn Rehmen, kennen zu lernen scheint, und nicht nur Menschen, sondern auch Thiere genießen hier die Wohlthaten der Weihnachtzeit. Alle Bewohner des Diebhofs, alle Sausthiere werden auf das Beste gespeist und bewirthet, die Böglein unterm Simmelszelte jubeln bazwischen, benn vor jeder Scheune, in jedem Biehhofe erheben sich hohe Stangen, auf beren Spigen volle Sa= fergarben sie zu einem reichen Mable einladen; selbst der ärmste Taglöhner begehrt und empfängt, wenn er auch selbst nicht eine Ühre besitzt, eine Korngarbe, stellt sie auf und läßt die Vögel an seiner leeren Scheune jubiliren.

Susanna hatte in der Weihnachtwoche viel zu thun gehabt und oft, theils ihrer eigenen Geschäfte, theils mehrer Weihnachtgeschenke, mit denen sie einige Verso= nen ihrer Umgebung überraschen wollte, wegen, spät

in bie Nacht hinein gewacht. Dies war auch wohl Ur= fache, baß fie am Morgen bes heiligen Abends die Zeit verschlief. Sie erwachte burch ein lautes Wogelgezwit= scher vor ihrem Fenster, und ihr Gewissen warf ihr vor, daß sie bei den Beschäftigungen der vorigen Tage ihrer Bögelchen, denen sie sonst Körner und Brotkru= men in ben Schnee zu streuen pflegte, fast gang ver= geffen hatte, und fie waren jest gefommen, fie baran zu erinnern. Ach, daß boch alle Anmahnungen bem Gezwitscher ber Bögel glichen! Boll Reue über ihre Bergeflichkeit, kleibete Susanna fich eiligst an und zog die Rouleaux auf. Und siehe da! vor ihrem Fenster stand eine hohe, schlanke Tanne, in deren grünem, franzförmig ausgeschnittenem Gipfel ein großes Bündel gold= gelben Safers ftedte, um bas eine große Schaar von Sperlingen und Buchfinken zwitschernd und naschend flog. Susanna erröthete und dachte: "Harald!" — Die Hausleute antworteten lachend auf Sufanna's Fragen, daß der Verwalter den Baum gepflanzt hätte; dieser stellte sich, als wüßte er nichts davon, wunderte fich über ben Baum mit bem Saferstrauße und über Die Art, wie er babin gefommen mare.

"Er müsse — sagte er — über Nacht gewachsen, und dies könne doch wohl nur von der herrlichen norwegisichen Erde wunderbaren Kraft gekommen sein. — Denn jedes Stäubchen dieses Bodens sei pulverisirtes Urgesbirge; nur solche Erde könne solche Wunderwerke hers

vorbringen."

Bormittags gingen Harald und Susanna in den Wiehhof und theilten mit eignen Händen den Kühen Hafer, den Schafen Brot und dem kleinen Federvich Körner aus. Beim Volke der Hühner nahm man bei dieser Gelegenheit große Verschiedenheit in den Charafteren wahr. Ginige riffen Alles begierig an sich, indem sie die anderen mit Krazen und Beißen bei Seite drängten, andere hielten sich in bescheidener Entfernung

und pickten voll Zufriedenheit die Körner, welche ihnen bas Glück bescheerte, auf, einige schienen ben anderen mehr zu gönnen als sich selbst. Bon so ebler Ratur war besonders ein junger Sahn mit hohem Kamme und einem hohen Behänge von goldigschillernden Febern, und einer fehr stolzen, eblen Haltung; er über= ließ ben Hühnern seinen Antheil, so bag er selbst kaum ein einziges Körnchen zum Effen bekam, bagegen betrachtete er mit ebler Sahnenmiene ben Schwarm, ber zu seinen Füßen fraß, und gackelte. Für bies schöne Benehmen erhielt er von Susannen ben Ramen: Ritter, ben er auch nachher immer behielt. Bei ben Gansen bemerkte sie mit Berdruß, daß die graue von dem weißen Anführer noch mehr bedrückt und gerupft war. Harald schlug vor, die graue zu schlachten, aber Su= fanna erklärte fich ereifernd, daß wenn eine von ben Nebenbuhlern geopfert werden folle, Dies die weiße fein müffe.

Einem Sause ohne Rinder, ohne Berwandte und Freunde, wo die Sausfrau mit ihrem Gram im Dunkel fist, kann ber Weihnachtabend nicht besondere Freuden brin= gen, aber Susanna hatte sich boch vorgesehen, sie zu verbrei= ten, und der Gedanke daran hatte ihr die ganze Woche wäh= rend ihrer vielfachen Geschäfte wie ein Weihnachtslicht bas Berg durchleuchtet, und im Ubrigen war fie fo, daß ihr Leben finfter gewesen sein mußte, wenn nicht die Aus= ficht, irgend Jemandem ein Vergnügen zu bereiten, wie ein Sternlein auf ihren Wegen bazwischen geschimmert hatte. Laring, Raring und Petro erhielten an Diesem Tage die Früchte ihrer Nachtwachen zu fosten, und als der Abend kam, und Susanna den Weihnachttisch für die Leute in der "Burgstube" angerichtet hatte, und ihn mit Laugenfisch (einer Art Kabliau), Braten, füßer Brüte, Ruchen, Buttertellern, Torten und Apfeln prangen und von vier Lichtern erhellt fab, als die auf bem Gute Dienenden nich mit vor Freude und Appetit ftrab=

lenden Augen um den Tisch versammelten, als der Alsteite in der Gesellschaft einen Lobgesang anstimmte, und alle Anderen mit gesalteten Händen und seierlicher Stimme einstimmten: da war Susannen zu Muthe, als sei sie nicht mehr in fremdem Lande, und sie setzte sich, nachsdem sie mit in den Gesang eingestimmt hatte, als die froheste, herzlichste Wirthin zu den Leuten an den Tisch, stieß mit Knechten und Mägden an, indem sie selbst die ungeheuerste Eßlust noch ausmunterte, und ließ die besten Bissen den Schwachen und Matten vorsetzen.

Frau Aftrid hatte Susannen gesagt: fie wolle biefen Abend allein auf ihrem Zimmer bleiben, und wünsche nur ein Glas Milch besorgt zu haben; aber Sufanna wollte es versuchen, sie durch eine kleine Uberraschung zur Freude aufzuregen, und hatte folgendes Komplott gegen ihren Frieden gemacht: Bu ber Zeit, wenn bas Glas Milch hineingetragen werden sollte, wird an beffen Stelle ein schöner, fleiner Anabe, der als Engel nach Sufannens Begriffen - ausstaffirt ift und eine Lichtfrone auf bem Kopfe trägt, leise bei ihr eintreten, und ihr aus ber Stube zu geben winken. Ginem fo schönen und lichten Boten würde die Obriftin unmöglich widerstehen können; er sollte sie bann in ben Salon führen, wo in einem Fichtenwald ein Tisch mit ber füßesten Grütze und ben ledersten Torten gebedt mar; hinter ben Vichten stand bas versammelte Sausgefinde, um auf eine im Orte fehr wohlbefannte Melodie einen Gesang zum Lobe ihrer herrin und mit guten Bun= ichen für beren Zufunft anzustimmen.

Harald, dem Susanna ihren Plan mitgetheilt hatte, schüttelte freilich zuerst bedenklich den Kopf dazu ging aber später auch darauf ein, leistete ihr nicht nur beim Einsbringen der Tannen, sondern auch beim Ausputzen des Engels bei der Ausführung hülfreiche Hand. Susanna war ganz außer sich vor Freude über ihren kleinen, schönen Boten, und folgte ihm still und leise auf den

Fersen, als er mit einigem Grausen vor seinem eignen Kopf und der leuchtenden Krone leise in Frau Aftrid's

Zimmer schlich.

Harald öffnete dem Knaben leise die Thüre. Drinnen sah man die Obristin in dem hinteren Zimmer auf einem Lehnstuhl, das Gesicht in die Hände gesenkt. Die Tischlampe warf einen matten Schein auf ihre schwarzegekleidete Gestalt. Beim Knarren der Thüre sah sie auf und stierte eine Weile den Andlick, der sich ihr darbot, an, dann sprang sie heftig auf, preste die Hände gegen ihr Herz, stieß einen schwachen Schreckensschrei aus, und sank leblos zusammen. Susanna stieß ihren Engel heftig fort, stürzte auf ihre Gebieterin zu, nahm sie in die Arme, und trug sie in der schrecklichsten Angst aus Bett. Harald aber faste den armen Engel, der mit seiner Krone, deren heißer Talg ihm über Stirne und Backen lief, das Gleichgewicht verloren hatte, und

auf's traurigste wehklagte.

Schnell glückte es Susannen, ihre Herrin wieder in's Leben zurückzurufen, aber eine Zeitlang schien es, als ob ihre Sinne verwirrt wären, und sie sprach verwor= rene und unzusammenhängende Phrasen, von denen Susanna nur die Worte: "Erscheinung — unglückliches Rind — todt" — verstand. Hieraus schloß Sujanna, daß ber nachgemachte Engel sie erschreckt hätte, und sie rief weinend: "Ach! es war ja nur Hans Guttorm= fen's kleiner Junge, den ich als Engel angezogen habe, um der gnädigen Frau eine Freude zu machen. Gufanna fab jest deutlich ein, wie äußerst wenig glücklich Dieser Gedanke gewesen war, aber Frau Affrid lauschte ber Erklärung Susannens in Sinsidyt auf Die Erscheinung, von der sie so sehr erschüttert worden war, mit ber gespanntesten Aufmertsamfeit. Endlich löste fich ihr frampfhafter Zustand in eine Thränenfluth auf. Gufanna, Die außer fich vor Schmerz barüber mar, bag fie ihrer Dame Rummer statt Freude gemacht hatte,

füßte, unter innigen Bitten um Berzeihung, weinend

ihre Rleider, Sande und Fuße.

Frau Aftrid antwortete mit milder Stimme, wiewohl heftig bewegt: "Du hast es gut gemeint, Susanna! Du konntest ja nicht wissen, wie weh du mir thun würdest, aber laß es dir nie mehr einfallen — versuche es nie mehr, mir eine Freude machen zu wollen, ich werde nimmermehr froh, nimmermehr glücklich werden. Auf meinem Herzen liegt ein Stein, der erst, wenn der Stein auf mein Grah gelegt wird, gehoben werden kann. Doch jetzt gehe, Susanna! die Einsamkeit thut mir noth — mir wird bald wieder besser sein!"

Susanna bat um die Erlaubniß, ein Glas Milch bringen zu dürsen, was Frau Astrid auch gestattete. Als sie es hereingebracht hatte, mußte sie sich wieder mit einem von Qual erfüllten Herzen entsernen. Als sie zu Harald herausgekommen war, schüttete sie ihren Schmerz über den unglücklichen Plan vor ihm aus und theilte ihm die heftige Gemüthsbewegung der Obristin

und ihre dufteren, troftlosen Worte mit.

Harald ward dabei bleich und versiel in ein tiefes Sinnen, wodurch Susanna noch niedergeschlagener wurde. Sie harte freilich noch eine kleine Freudenmine, auf deren Explosion sie sich sehr gefreut hatte, übrig, allein diese machte keine Wirkung mehr auf die verstörten Sinne. Harald lächelte zwar und ries: Alle Hagel! als die Weste aus dem Weizenwecken hervorkam, und dankte Susannen, indem er ihr die Hand drückte, aber er hatte ersichtlich so wenig Freude an ihrem Geschenke, seine Gedanken waren so offenbar auf einen andern Gegenstand gerichtet, daß jeder Schimmer einer Weihenachtlust für Susannen erlosich. Alls sie allein auf ihrem Zimmer war und aus den Fenstern sah, wie aus jeder Hütte im Thale ein kleiner Lichtschimmer floß, und dachte, wie da drinnen Eltern, Kinder, Geschwister und Freunde in vertraulichem Kreise versams

melt wären, da empfand sie schmerzlich, daß sie ein sam im fremden Lande sei, und nahm, indem sie sie erinnerte, wie sie vordem an diesem Abende ihre klein Hulda glücklich gemacht hatte, und wie ihr früher Allee was sie für die Kleine unternommen hatte, geglück war, ein Halstuch, das früher den Hals des geliebte Schwesterchens umschlossen hatte, und bedeckte dasselk mit heißen Jähren und Küssen. Einen großen The der Nacht brachte Susanna auf der Thürschwelle ik rer Gebieterin zu und lauschte besorgt auf die ur aufhörlich im Zimmer schallenden Schritte, aber aus genommen einige tiese Seuszer hörte sie keinen Schmerzensruf, der sie berechtigt hätte, die Einsamkeit de Obristin zu stören.

Wir wollen uns jetzt zu etwas helleren Bildern wer den. In Norwegen gibt es eine freundliche Sitte, welch die "Weihnachtentourmachen" genannt wird; zur Weit nachtzeit zieht man in Prozession umher, besucht ein ander in den gastfreien Häusern und schmaust, spie und tanzt. Dieses nennt man "die Weihnachtentow

machen (att tura jul.)"

Diese Prozession besuchte auch das abgesondert liegende, einsame Heimthal. Der Psarrer der Parochiagemeinde, der freundliche, gastsveie Pastor Middelber hatte nämlich Freunde und Bekannte, rund herum ider Gegend, ja sogar die Einwohner von Semb auf dezweiten Weihnachttag zu einem Gastgebot nach de

Pfarrhause einladen laffen.

Die Obristin ließ sich entschuldigen, bat aber St fanna und Harald der Einladung zu folgen. Es hat gerade mehre Tage hindurch gefroren und frischer Schn war gefallen, so daß die Bahn vortresslich und Hara wieder bei guter Laune war, und sich ein kleines Fe daraus zu machen schien, Susannen im kleinen Schli ten mit tönendem Schellengeläute nach dem Pfarrhau zu fahren. Die Obristin hatte wieder ganz ihr gewöhnliches Wesen und Aussehen, und die, über alle Folgen der unglückseligen Weihnachtabendanstalten, beruhigte Susanna konnte mit leichterem Herzen sich den angenehmen, von der Winterspaziersahrt gebotenen Eindrücken überlassen, und diese waren für ein Wesen, wie Susanna, die so wenig durch irgend eine Art von Vergnügungen verwöhnt war und überdem noch einen so unverdorbenen, empfänglichen Geist hatte, reich und mannigfaltig. Die Lust war so klar, der Schnee so glänzend, Berg und Wald so prächtig, das Pferd so munter, und Harald suhr so unbeschreiblich gut, daß ihm die gefährlichsten Stellen nur ein Spielwerk waren und Susanna ein Mal über das andere ries: "ach!

wie schön, wie angenehm."

Dazu kam noch, daß Harald ganz ungewöhnlich böflich und unterhaltend war. Aleugerft beforgt, bag Susanna recht gut fige, warm an ben Fugen fei u. f. w. zeigte er ihr zugleich angelegentlichst alle Merkwür= digkeiten und Schönheiten der Gegend, ferner erzählte er vieles Interessante von den Eigenthümlichkeiten des umliegenden Landstrichs, von beffen Balbern, Bergen und Steinarten, ibrach von Ur = und Uebergangsgebir= gen, von dem, mas vor ber Sündfluth mar und von bem, was nach berselben sich bilbete, jo bag Sufanna über seine große Gelehrsamfeit erstaunte und ein Ge= fühl ber Sochachtung vor ihm in ihr aufstieg; freilich verminderte fich biefes in etwas, als fich ploglich ein Streit zwischen ihnen entspann, ba Barald behauptete, Die Sonne schiene in Norwegen heller, als in Schweben, welches Susanna auf bas Beftigste bestritt, inbem fie gerade bas Gegentheil behauptete und auch von bem himmelestriche, ber wie fie meinte in Rorwegen ein anderer sei als in Schweben - sonft ging bie Fahrt im Ganzen in guter Eintracht von Statten, und war für Harald's Unseben bochft gunftig. Durch sein Fah=

ren, seine Zuvorkommenheit und Gelehrsamkeit hatte er in ihren Augen etwas Großartiges. Außerorbentlichei befommen

Alls fie nach einer ungefähr eine Meile langen Fahr bem Bfarrhofe naher kamen, faben fie von mehren Seiter fleine Schlitten aus den Thalwegen fommen, und die felbe Richtung wie fie über bas schneebedectte Feld ein schlagen. Die schnaubenden Rosse bliesen Dampfwirbe

aus den Nüstern und lustig klang das Schellengeläut durch die klare Luft, Susanna war entzückt. Nicht weniger war sie es über die Herzlichkeit, mi welcher sie, die Unbekannte, Dienende, in dem Pfarr hause von den fremden, wohlhabenden und angesehene Leuten aufgenommen wurde. Susanna war überder neugierig zu feben, wie es in einem anftandigen nor wegischen Pfarrhause war und zuging, und es war ih daher sehr angenehm, als die freundliche Frau Pafte rin fie einlud bas Saus zu besehen und ihrer älteste Tochter: Thea fagte, sie moge sie vom Reller bis zur Boben umherführen. Daburch bekam Sufanna eir große Achtung vor der im Sause bes Predigers hern schenden Ordnung, fand Mehres woraus sie etwa lernen konnte, aber auch Einiges, welches fie nach it rer schwedischen Methode besser zu haben glaubte. A fie zur Gefellschaft zurückgekehrt war, fand fie Dieles ? betrachten und zu überlegen; sie war übrigens De ganzen Tag hindurch in einer aufgeregten Stimmur — es schien ihr als sähe sie hier ein Bild bes Woh ergehens und Glücks, wie sie es sich zuweilen erträur hatte, verwirklicht, und als muffe bas Leben in fein einzelnen Berhältniffen in Diefer großartigen Natur, fcon fein. Das Verhältniß zwischen Aeltern und Ri bern, zwischen Herrschaft und Dienenden, erschien i so herzlich so patriarchalisch. Sie hörte die Dienstb ten im Hause den Prediger und dessen Gattin: "B ter" und "Mutter" nennen, sie fah die älteste Tocht

mit bei ber Bewirthung ber Gafte, und zwar so froh und ungezwungen, bag man gleich erfennen fonnte, fie thue es von Herzen gern, helfen; — ein offenbares Boblwollen auf allen Besichtern, eine Sorgenlosigfeit, eine Einfachheit im Betragen, dies Alles machte Su-fanna so leicht ums Herz, indem doch zugleich ein feuchter Glanz babei in ihren Augen aufstieg. - "Sind Sie eine Freundin von Blumen ?" fragte bie hubsche Thea, und brach, als Sufanna dies bejahte, ihr bie schönste Rose, welche vor dem Fenster blühte. Die größte Freude machten ihr aber die beiden jungsten Kinder im Hause, und das herzliche: "mein Mama= chen!" womit sie die Mutter anredeten, schien ihr das Sarmonischste, mas fie je gebort hatte. Darin hatte Sufanna auch gang Recht, Denn lieblichere Worte als bie: "mein Mamachen (mora mi!)" wenn sie von schmeichelnden Kinderlippen ausgesprochen werden, gibt es auf Erden nicht mehr. Die kleine Minna, ein Kind, ungefähr gleichen Alters mit Sulba, voll Lebens und Munterkeit, ward besonders ber Liebling Susannens, welche nur wünschte, daß der kleine Wildfang länger ruhig auf ihren Knieen hatte bleiben mogen. Sufanna gewann felbst in gang unvermuthet hohem Grabe bie Gunft ihrer Wirthe, indem fie bei Tisch in einem fri= tischen Augenblick beim Serviren aufstand, mit gewan= beter und sicherer Sand beisprang, und die Sache aus jeber Gefahr brachte; sie fuhr auch nachher noch fort behülflich zu sein, wo es noth that; dieses gestel allge= mein und man betrachtete die junge Schwedin mit im= mer freundlicheren Blicken; fie fühlte bies bankbar und gewann die, welche ihr jo geneigt maren, immer mehr und mehr lieb.

Gegen das Ende des reichlichen und fräftigen Mah= les wurden Gesundheiten ausgebracht und Lieder ge= sungen. Susanna mußte rechts und links, geradeüber

Streit u. Frieden. I.

und schrägeüber anstoßen, sie stimmte vom allgemeine Beiste mit fortgerissen in das schöne Volkslied:

"Das alte Mormeg, meerumfranget."

mit ein, und schien den Oppositionsgeist gegen Norwe gen und die Norweger ganz vergessen zu haben. Wi stimmte sie auch aus voller Scele in den letzten Toaf den der Wirth mit leuchtenden und thränenseuchten Au gen ausbrachte: "Was wir lieben" — sie dachte ih rer kleinen Hulda.

Wir wollen aber jett zu dem übergehen, welche diesem Tag eine so große Bedeutung für Susanne

gab.

Nach dem Mittagstisch und dem Kaffee trennte sic die Gesellschaft nach der in Norwegen herrschende Sitte. Die Frauen blieben auf dem Sofa und in de Lehnstülen rings herum sitzen, und sprachen von de Begebenheiten ihrer Nachbarschaft; von häuslichen Angelegenheiten, und den jetzt glücklich überstandenen Weitnachtarbeiten und die Worte "mühsame, schwere Arbeit" wurden oft dabei gehört.

Die jungen Mädchen schaarten sich am Fenster zu sammen, und von ihnen her hörte man Worte, wie "But" und "Sott, wie niedlich" neb

Lachen und Scherzen.

Im anftogenden Zimmer fagen die Berren bei Pfe

fen und Bolitik zusammen.

Susanna saß nahe der geöffneten Thüre des Zim mers, in welchen sich die Herrn hefanden; sie konn nicht umhin, da das, was um sie her gesprochen wurd wenig Interesse für sie hatte, auf das zu hören, wa im Herrenzimmer verhandelt ward, denn sie hörte da selbst eine grobe Stimme in den ehrenrührigsten Aus drücken über Schweden und die Einwohner reden. Sv sannas Blut wallte auf und ihre Hände ballten sie unwillkürlich. — D mein Gott — seufzte sie — warur

bin ich kein Mann! Die patriotische Bürgermeisterstochter brannte vor Begier auf den los zu stürzen, der es wagte ihr Vaterland so zu schmähen. Da sie dies nicht ruhig mit anhören konnte und vor ihrem eigenen Jorn besorgt war, wollte sie ausstehen und einen ansberen Platz suchen, hielt aber inne, als sie eine ernste, männliche Stimme zu Gunsten des fremden, verläumdeten Landes sich erheben hörte. Ein Trost war es gewißlich sür Susanna, Schweden mit eben so großem Ernste, als mit Sachkunde vertheidigen zu hören, eine Wollust war es für sie die Behauptungen der groben Stimme von der anderen minder lärmenden, aber krästigeren widerslegen, und diese letztere, nachdem sie das Feld behauptet hatte, folgende an Gustav Adolphs Vaterland, bei dessen Tode, gerichtete Verse, recitiren zu hören.

Erbleichet auch einmal dein Glanz, Und welfet Dein grünender Kranz Gebeugete Mutter! Erinnerungswehen Wird nimmer vergehen; Und die dankbare Welt, sie gedenkt, Daß du ihr Gustav geschenkt.*)

Ja, wahrlich dies war ein Himmelreich für Susansnens Gesühle, aber die Stimme, die so schön sprach, welche Schweden vertheidigte, die ihr dies Himmelreich bereitete, diese Stimme wirfte noch mehr auf Susanna, als alles Andere, denn es war — Harald's Stimme. Susanna traute ihren Ohren nicht, sie mußte ihre Ausgen zu Hülfe rusen, und als sie nicht mehr daran zweisseln konnte, daß der edle Vertheidiger ihres Vaterlands Harald war, dar ward sie so überrascht, so froh, daß sie beinahe in dem Ueberwallen ihrer Empfindungen, eine Thorheit begangen hätte, wenn nicht gerade in diesem Augenblicke eine der älteren Damen der Gesellsschaft auf sie zugekommen wäre, und sie mit sich in

^{*)} Die Wahlstatt bei Lugen, von Rein.

einen ruhigeren Winkel bes Zimmers geführt hatt um fie baselbst nach Bequemlichkeit über Alles, was i wiffen wollte, auszufragen. Diefe Frau gehörte zu D (über alle Länder verbreiteten) Klaffe, die in etwas b Schmarogerpflanze gleicht, indem sie, wie diese, dur ben Nahrungsstoff welchen sie aus den Gewächsen, c Die sie sich klammert, zieht, Wachsthum und Blüthe erlangt. Da biefe Frau braungekleidet ward und ein bra: nes Band an ber Saube trug, fo finden wir es fe angemeffen, Dieselbe Frau Braun zu nennen. Sufant mußte also ber Frau Braun über ihre Familie, ih Beimath, alle ihre Berhältniffe, wie sie nach Norm gen gekommen ware? wie es ihr ba gefiele? u. f. Rebe stehen. Hierin war Sufanna ziemlich offenbe zig, als man aber das Gespräch auf ihre jezige Lag und auf ihre Berrin lenkte, ward fie zuruckhaltend Dabei lag ber Frau Braun mehr baran felbst zu zählen, als zu fragen, "Ich habe — fagte sie — Obristin in früherer Zeit sehr gut gekannt. Sie meine ganz hübsche Person, aber immer etwas stolz; tehrte mich aber nicht daran, und wir vertrugen us recht gut miteinander. Man hat mir gerathen ich fole jetzt einen Besuch in Semb machen, aber — ich me nicht — ich habe sie, seitdem sie so wunderlich gemis den ist, nicht wiedergesehen. Gott! theuerste Freund! wie können Sie es nur bei ihr aushalten? Sie il ja so schrecklich buster und bekummert sein.

Susanna lobte dagegen ihre Herrin außerordentl, und sagte, daß sie freilich traurig wäre und unglück zu sein schiene, daß dieses aber sie (nämlich: Susan:)

fester an die Oberstin banbe.

Unglücklich! — wiederholte Frau Braun — ja, wit das Alles wäre, — aber — ach Gott!

Susanna fragte verwundert, was sie damit meine Frau Braun antwortete: "ich sage nichts und glase nichts Böses von ihr" ich vertheidige sie noch imm,

aber wunderlich sieht es jedenfalls mit ihr aus. Glauben Sie wohl, daß es Menschen gibt, die so boshaft sind — zu reben — einen Verdacht zu haben — wegen — Mordes?"

Susannen vergingen Sprache und Sinne, sie stierte bie Rednerin an. —

"Ja, ja, fuhr Frau Braun mit geläufiger Bunge fort - so sagt man; ber Obrift, ihr Mann, ber ein gang ichlechter Menich mar, wird wohl bie größte Schulb baben, aber fie mag vielleicht auch etwas von ber Sache gewußt haben, — so heißt es. Sehen Sie, sie hatten einen Knaben bei sich, ihren Schwestersohn. Die Mutzter starb nachdem sie das Kind ihrer Schwester und ihrem Schwager zur Obhut übergeben hatte. Was paifirt nun? - Eines Tages ift ber Junge fort und nie wiedergekommen; man weiß nicht wohin er gegangen ift, aber seinen Mantel findet man auf einer Klippe an der See und Bluttropfen auf den Steinen brunten! Der Knabe war und blieb fort, und fein Bermögen fam ben Bermanbten febr gut gu Statten, benn ber Obrift hatte Alles was er und feine Frau befagen, verspielt; aber ber Berr ichlug in feiner Gerechtigkeit auch ben Obersten fünf Jahre lang mit Stummheit und Lähmung, und sie hat vielleicht seit der Zeit keinen frohen Tag auf Erben gehabt." —

Erbleicht in der Aufregung ihrer Gefühle, und mit demselhen Eiser, mit dem sie früher — die Ehre ihres Vaterlands vertheidigt hatte, vertheidigte Susanna jest auch die Unschuld ihrer Herrin, ward aber darin von dem freundlichen Wirth, der sie aufsorderte, sich an die übrigen jungen Leute zu Spiel und Tanz zu schliessen, unterbrochen. Susanna war aber von dem Geshörten so ergriffen, und sehnte sich so sehr nach Hause zu ihrer Herrin, welche sie jest, da man sie so schmähelich verläumdet hatte mehr als jemals liebte; daß sie bat, man möchte sie von den Weihnachtspielen dispensie

ren, und ihren Wunsch, heimzufahren, zu erkennen gab. Sie wollte aber Harald nicht der Gesellschaft entreißen, sondern unverzagt die Fahrt allein unternehmen, "zu fahren (so sagte sie) verstände sie, und den Weg würde ste auch wohl finden." Raum aber merkte Harald ihre Absicht, so machte er sich fertig sie zu begleiten, und Susanna wollte sich nicht widersetzen; dagegen hatte Wirth und Wirthin in ihrer Herzlichkeit viel dagegen einzuwenden, daß ihre Gafte sie so schnell verlaffen wollten, und drohten ihnen mit "Aasgaardsreija," welche um die Weihnachtzeit zu hausen pflegte, und die sie, wenn sie auf ihrem unverständigen Borfate beharrten, unterweges fortführen wurde. Sie thaten es gleich= wohl und suhren, von den Wirthen bis an den Schlitzten begleitet, ab. Susanna dankte diesen mit gerührtem Herzen für alle ihre Güte, versprach der liebenswürdi= gen Thea, daß sie einander öfter besuchen wollten, und küßte die kleine an ihrem Halse hangende Minna herz=

Kaum war Susanna im Schlitten, und dieser zwi-schen Berg und Waldung, so machte sie ihrem Herzen Luft, und theilte Harald die Beschichte, die sie eben gehört hatte, mit. Ihr Abschen war nicht geringer, als sein Born über eine so niedrige Berläumdung, und über die Menschen, welche folche Erzeugnisse ihrer eigenen schwarzen Seele verbreiteten. Ja er eiferte so heftig gegen die alte Frau Braun, und äußerte sich so feindselig drohend gegen ihre Wohlfahrt, wobei bas Pferd so heftige Seitensprünge und Sätze machte, daß Susanna es sich eifrigst angelegen sein ließ, das Gesspräch auf etwas Anders zu lenken, und sie fragte Haralb daher was "Aasgaardsreija" bedeute, und warum man sie damit habe schrecken wollen?

Sierbei fam Sarald wieder in feine gewöhnliche gute Laune, und versicherte Sufannen, daß damit keinesweges zu scherzen sei. "Die Aasgaardsreija — fagte er —

besteht aus ben Geistern, welche nicht gut genug für den himmel, und nicht schlecht genug für bie Bölle find, g. B. aus Trinfern, feinen Betrugern, turg aus allen Denen, welche fich aus einer ober ber andern Ur= jache bem Teufel verschrieben haben; bafür muffen fie gur Strafe bis zum Ende ber Welt immer umberrei= ten. Voran reitet "Guro-Ryffe" ober "Reisa-Rova", Die an ihrem langen Schwanze kenntlich ift; hinter ihr brein fommt eine große Schaar beiderlei Beschlechts. Die Pferde find fohlschwarz, und ihre Augen leuchten im Dunkeln wie Feuer. Gie werben mit einem Gebig oon glübendem Eisen regiert und reiten über Waffer ind Land, und bas wilbe Salloh ber Reiter, bas Schnau= ben ber Roffe, bas Geklirre ber eifernen Zäumung macht in Larmen, welches weithin gehört wird. Wo fie einen Sattel über bas Dach werfen, muß ein Mensch fterben, ind wenn fie vernehmen, daß es irgendwo Mord und Tobtschlag seten wird, so kommen sie babin und seten ich auf die Thurpfosten, und rumoren und lachen sich n's Fäustchen. Wenn man die Aasgaardsreija kommen ört, so muß man sich gleich glatt auf ben Boben wer= en, und thun, als ob man schliefe; benn thut man ies nicht, so wird man von bem Buge aufgepact, und hnmächtig auf eine, weit von bem Orte, wo man d befunden hat, entfernte Stelle hingeschleubert. Dft pird man badurch fein ganges Leben lang schwermuthig nd frank. Der Tugendhafte aber, ber nich beim Ber= mnahen bes Buges sogleich auf bie Erde wirft, hat ichts zu befahren, außer baß Jeber von ber luftigen Besellschaft auf ihn spuckt. Wenn ber Zug vorbei ift, fpuct man wieber, und bie Sache ift damit vorbei." Sarald sagte ferner, bağ biefer Bug für gewöhnlich llerdings um Weihnachten unterweges, und nichts mög= der mare, bag ihnen berfelbe noch heute Abend beignete, in biefem Falle bliebe Sufannen nichts übrig, 8 schnell aus bem Schlitten zu springen, und fich mit

der Nase platt auf den Boden, das Gesicht im Schnee, zu werfen, bis die wilde Schaar vorübergezogen wäre. *)

Susanna meinte zwar, daß sie gar nicht an diese Geschichte glaube, aber Harald sagte so ernsthaft: sie würde schon einmal ersahren, daß dem so sei, und Susanna neigte sich von Natur so sehr zum Wunderbaren hin, daß sie oft, und besonders in den engen Thalsschluchten, ihren Blick, halb fürchtend, halb wünschend die schwarzen Rosse mit den Feueraugen und glühens den Zäumen zu sehen, empor richtete, aber nur die hellen, dann und wann vom Nordschein, der seine glänzenden, flüchtigen Schleier über das Himmelsgewölbe hinwallen ließ, verdunkelten Sterne blickten auf sie herznieder.

In Semb angelangt, sahen sie den gewohnten, matten, aus den Fenstern der Obristin scheinenden Lichtschimmer. Susanna's Herz pochte heftig, und tiesseufzend sagte sie: "Ach, was ist diese Welt böse! So das Schwere noch schwerer und Unglück zum Verbrechen zu machen. Was können wir thun, um sie gegen die Angrisse der Bosheit zu beschützen?

"Die Braun soll wenigstens ihre Lügen nicht weiter verbreiten — sagte Harald — ich werde morgen zu ihr hinfahren, und sie zwingen, ihre eignen Worte zu versichlucken, und werde sie davon abschrecken, sie je wieder

herauftommen zu laffen."

"Ja, das ist recht und gut!" — rief Susanna ver= gnügt aus.

^{*)} Das Brausen und Lärmen in der Luft, welches sich bei heftigen Stürmen, besonders in Gebirgsgegenden, erhebt, ist wahrscheinlich die Ursache zur Entstehung der "Aasgaardsreija". Sage gewesen. Daß sie ihe ren Ursprung im Heidenthume hat, ist teinem Zweifel unterworfen; man weiß aber nicht, ob sie mit dem Einreiten der gefallenen Kämpen in Aasgaard, oder mit den luftigen Zügen der Nornen und Waltyrien in Bersbindung sieht. Die Sage hat ihre jesige Gestalt während des Christenthums erhalten, als die alten Götter, dem Volksglauben nach, in bose Mächte und Teuselsdiener verwandelt wurden

"Wenn einem Kinde etwas zustößt — fuhr Harald hestig fort — die Verwandten eines absichtlichen Mords beschuldigen! Kann man sich etwas Elenderes und Unssinnigeres denken? Nein, solche Schlangen sollen wenigstens nicht die Unglückliche umzischen; sie zu ersticken, das sei meine Sache" — und damit drückte Harald Susannens Hand zum Abschied und ging von ihr.

"Und meine Sache — dachte Susanna, mit Thränen in den Augen, soll es sein, sie zu lieben und ihr treu zu dienen. Bielleicht daß sie, wenn Ordnung und Gesteihen sich immer mehr um sie her verbreiten, wenn manche kleinen Annehmlichkeiten sie täglich umgeben, wieder Liebe zum Leben bekommt.

Stille Wochen.

Wenn durch das Feld die schweren Wolfen jagen, Die Haine trauern in verwelkter Tracht, Da wirfet doppelt Sympathieenmacht, .
Berheißet, in den winterlichen Tagen, Für unster Herzen Bundniß Lenzespracht.

Belhaven.

Haft du in tiefen Gruben den schwerfälligen, gleich= mäßigen und ähenden, den Boden, auf den er sällt, aushöhlenden Fall von Tropsen gehört? auch des zwis schen grünenden Usern sich fortschlängelnden, nickende Blumen und das strahlende Himmelslicht abspiegelnden Baches Gemurmel? Darin webt ein heimliches Gez zwitscher, ein Säuseln der Lust. — Hier hast du Bilz der von zwei Arten, wie Himmel und Hölle von einz ander verschiedenen, Stilllebens. Beide wurden auf Erden, beide während der solgenden Monate auf Semb in Heimthal gelebt; das erstere von Frau Astrid, das andere von Harald und Susannen. Doch mit der Abeweichung, daß zuweilen der höhlende Tropsen von einem zusällig aufspringenden Winde zersprüht, und mitunter des tändelnden Baches Wogen von allerlei Schlamm getrübt wurde.

Der Januar verging mit seiner zunehmenden Sonne, seiner zunehmenden Winterschönheit. Der Wassersall bildete Blumen, Palmen, Trauben, ja ganze Fruchtsfüllhörner von Eis an seinen Usern. Die Dompsassen mit Purpurbrust glänzten wie hüpfende Flammen auf dem klaren Schnee. Der Winter blühte in schimmernsden über Wald und Flur verstreuten Arystallen, in der klaren Frische der Luft, im Gesang der Drossel, im blendenden Glanze der Schneegefilde. Bauholz ward im Walde gefällt, und Gesänge aus Tegner's Frithiosssage erschallten oft dazu; man suhr auf Schlitten im Thale, auf Schneeschuhen über die Berge — überall wogte frisches Leben.

Der Zwist auf Semb in den schwedischen und norwegischen Angelegenheiten hatte schon seit Weihnachten abgenommen; zwar versuchte Harald einige Ausfälle gegen das schwedische Eisen, schwedische Waldungen u. s. w., aber Susanna glaubte gar nicht mehr, daß er das so im Ernste meine, und ließ sich deshalb nicht davon ausreizen, und der letzte Angriff auf das schwedische Wetter siel so matt aus, daß Harald sich vornahm, die Sache für's Erste aus sich beruhen zu lassen, und sich nach einem andern Gegenstande zum Streiten umsah, um sich damit während des Winters warm zu halten.

Februar und März kamen heran; dies ist der schlimmste Theil des nordischen Winters, der im Januar jung war, jetzt aber, besonders in den hütten, wo keine gröspere Umsicht zu Hause ist, alt und grau und schwer wird. Man hat sowohl im Hause wie auf dem Viehbose beinahe Alles verzehrt. Es wird den hungernden Kindern schwer, Holz vom Walde nach Hause zu schlep= pen, wenn man dabei nur mageren Wasserbrei, und auch den nicht einmal immer, in ihrem Topfe kocht.

Der April naht; er heißt der Lenzmonat, und in den Wolfen singen die Lerchen, aber in den tiesen Thälern klagt um diese Zeit oft die größte Sorge und Noth. Dann streut der arme Landmann oft Asche und Sand auf den Schnee, damit dieser etwas früher schmelze, und er seinen Boden zwischen den rings umher ausgethürmsten Schneewällen pflügen könne. Susanna ward wäherend dieser Monate in den Hütten des Thals sehr bekannt, und ihr warmes Herz fand dort reichlich Gegens

ftanbe ber Theilnahme und Fürforge.

Barald zeigte fich, um jebe Gelegenheit, Sufannen vor fich und seinem Charafter schaudern zu machen, zu benuten, bei ihren Berichten von der Noth, welche fie felbst mit angesehen hatte, kalt und unbeweglich, und hatte ein großes Talent, auf alle ihre Vorschläge zur Abhülfe dieses Elends mit: Rein! zu antworten. Er fprach viel von Strenge, beilfamen Lectionen u. bgl. m., und Susanna ermangelte nicht, ihn "ben grausamsten Menschen, einen Tyrannen Christian, einen wahren Menschenfeind" zu nennen, Wölfe und Baren hatten mehr Berg als er, nie wollte fie ihn wieder um etwas bitten, benn sie konnte eben so gut mit Stocken und Steinen sprechen - bamit ging sie fort und weinte ihre bitteren Thränen. Wenn fie aber bann fo mancher Noth von dem Menschenseind im Stillen abgeholfen fand, wenn sie sah, daß er in mehren Dingen ihre Rathschläge befolgt hatte, dann vergoß sie wohl auch im Stillen Freudenthränen, und vergaß fchnell alle ihre Plane, feindlich zurückhaltend gegen ihn zu fein. Nach und nach vergaß auch Harald seinen Zwist über den Gegenstand, weil das Interesse baran zu groß, zu mächtig war, und bann befanden fich Beide gerade mit einer und berselben Angelegenheit, obgleich mit einigem

Unterschied in der Art und Weise, beschäftigt. Susanna hatte zuerst Alles, was sie besaß, weggegeben. Als sie nun nichts mehr zu geben hatte, hörte sie auf Harald's Ansichten, daß die Armen in der Nachbarschaft im Allegemeinen weniger eigentlicher Almosen, als einer freundlichen und vernünftigen Theilnahme an ihren Angelezgenheiten, einer väterlichen und mütterlichen Bormundschaft bedürften, welche die verschmachteten Gerzen belebte, und die dem Sinken nahen Hände kräftigte, sich wieder zu heben, zu arbeiten und zu hossen. Unter der Rlasse, von der man sagen kann, sie arbeitet für das tägliche Brot, gibt es Menschen, die sich selbst helsen; es gibt Andere, denen Niemand helsen kann; aber der größere Theil besteht aus Solchen, die durch weisen Beistand mit Nath und That es so weit bringen könnsten, sich selbst zu helsen, und zu Wohlergehen, zu Besen, sich selbst zu helsen, und zu Wohlergehen, zu Besen, sich selbst zu helsen, und zu Wohlergehen, zu Besen, sich selbst zu helsen, und zu Wohlergehen, zu Besen,

ftanbigkeit zu gelangen.

Barald fah es für eine große Wichtigkeit an, bes Volkes Betriebsamkeit ausschließlicher zur Diehzucht anzuhalten, in der Ueberzeugung, daß sie allein das Gedeihen bieser Gegenden befördern könne. Sobald ba= her ber Schnee schmolz und bie Flur frei ward, ging er mit Burichen und Sausleuten hinaus, und beichaf= tigte fich eifrigst bamit, von ben Weibepläten bie Steine, womit dieselben bort zu Lande wie überfaet find, megzuschaffen, und neue Grasplätze aufzufinden, um Rath für eine größere Fülle an Futter zu schaffen, und Gu= fannens Berg schlug vor Freude, wenn sie seine Thä= tigkeit fab, und wie er felbst mit zu ben Arbeiten ging, und Alle durch fein Beispiel und feinen frischen Muth belebte. Dafür erhielt er auch jett öfters seine Leib= gerichte zu Mittag, ja Susanna fing jogar an, eines und bas andere berfelben, namentlich Graupenwelling mit fleinen Baringen, recht egbar zu finden. Dies Bericht, mit bem in Norwegen öfters bas Mittagseffen begon= nen wird, wird fo fervirt, daß jeder Gaft einen kleinen

Teller neben sich hat, auf dem die kleinen, blanken Häringe (in Schweden: hvassbukar genannt) liegen, und nun ist man abwechselnd einen Bissen vom Häring und einen Lössel vom Graupenwelling; das sieht recht hübsch aus und schmeckt auch ganz gut.

Gegen den Frühling hin war Harald sehr mit der Arbeit und den Arbeitern beschäftigt, so daß er wenig Zeit übrig hatte, um sie Susannen im Guten oder im Bösen zu widmen; da er aber die Entdeckung gemacht hatte, daß er möglicher Weise mit der Zeit eine schwache Brust bekommen könne, besuchte er Susanna jeden Morgen in der Milchkammer, um ein Glaß frisch durchgesiebter Milch aus ihrer Hand zu empfangen. Dagegen gab er ihr örgend eine frischausgeblühte Lenzeblume, oder mitunter zur Abwechslung eine Nessel (welche sie dann stets zornig in einen Winkel warf) und folgte übrigens mit der größten Ausmerksamkeit den Ereignissen in der Milchkammer und Susannens Bewegungen, wenn sie die Milch aus den Milcheimern in Bütten siebte, und sie auf den Anrichtbrettern ordenete, wobei ihn die Lust anwandelte, sich in folgenden Monolog zu verlieren:

"Sieh einmal an, das kann man geschickt nennen! Wie schön sie bei der Arbeit und mit dem frohen, freundlichen Gesichte aussieht! — Alles, was sie ansrührt, gedeiht — Alles nimmt unter ihrer Aussicht zu und trägt Früchte; wenn sie nur nicht so hestig und aussahrend wäre — aber es kommt ihr doch nicht vom Serzen, denn ein gutherzigeres Wesen gibt es gar nicht. Menschen und Thiere lieben sie und gedeihen bei ihr — wie glücklich wird der Mann sein, der — h'm! —"

Wollen wir nicht zugleich einen Blick in Susannens Herz thun? Da sieht es etwas absonderlich aus. Die Sache war die: Harald war, theils durch seine Neckezreien und Unarten, theils durch seine Freundlichkeit, seine Geschichten und die Gediegenheit, welche Susanna

immer mehr und mehr bei ihm entdeckte, so in allen ihren Gedanken und Empfindungen eingewurzelt, daß sie ihn nicht mehr daraus fortschaffen konnte. In Zorn, wie in Dankbarkeit, in Gutem, wie in Bösem: immer mußte sie an ihn denken. Manchen Abend legte sie sich mit dem Wunsche, sie möge ihn nie wieder sehen, nies der, wachte aber am andern Morgen mit der geheimen Sehnsucht, ihn wieder zu sinden, auf. Ihr Verhältniß zu einander glich gar sehr dem Aprilwetter; am deutslichsten zeigt uns dies —

9.

Ein Maitag.

Zum ersten Mal, zum ersten Mal Macht groß gar manche niedre Zahl. Es währet furz — Sefunden nur, Zugleich verschwindet Beider Spur.

Das Gras seibst hat ein solches Test, Den jungen Lenz schäßt man da best, Wenn's erste Grün der Erd' entsprießt Und aus dem Zweig das Herzblatt schießt.

So mild ist Gott, daß jedes Ding Sein verst Mal" hat, sei's auch gering, In der Sekund das Todte lebt, Das Leben sich gen Himmel hebt. H. Wergeland.

Es war im Beginne des Mai. Ein heftiger Resgenschauer hatte unlängst aufgehört. Vom Süden sprang der Wind auf, wehte mild und frisch und jagte Schaaren weisser Wolken über den sich aufklärenden himmel.

Auf dem Hofe zu Semb, der während des Regens wie verödet war, begann es wieder lebendig und voll Bewegung zu werden. Sechs Enten watschelten äußerst wohlgemuth hervor und in die Lache, in welcher sie sich badeten und putz-

ten, hinein.

Der: "Ritter" genannte Hahn scharrte in der Erde umher und sing darauf an lebhaft zu locken, um das durch anzuzeigen, daß er etwas Gutes anzubieten habe, und als zwei hübsche graugeperlte Hühner heraneilten, ließ er einem schönen männlichen Instinkt gemäß aus seinem Schnabel für sie erst ein Korn und dann wies der eines fallen. Diesen Instinkt benutzen die Hühner ohne Umstände und Komplimente. Wie frei und uns

gebunden leben boch die Thiere!

Der falfutische Sahn war in großen Sorgen, und behauptete nur mubfam bie Faffung. Seine weiße Dame war ber Einladung bes Sahnes (bie fie ver= muthlich für eine allgemeine hielt) gefolgt; fie lief, was fie konnte, mit ihren langen Beinen, und ftedte ihren Kopf zwischen den Köpfen der Hühner durch, um an deren Gastmahl Theil zu nehmen. Der ritterliche junge Sahn zog fich babei etwas verwundert und mit einem gewiffen, von Betroffenheit zeugenden Rehllaute, etwas ftolz zurud, war aber boch zu viel "Gentleman", um bie fremde, fo mir nichts bir nichts fich einfindende Schone irgendwie zu beleidigen; aber bie graugesprenkelten Buh= ner brehten ihr ben Ruden zu. Ihr verlaffener Chegemahl gakelte in ber größten Berzweiflung und blies fich, mit vor Born hochrothem Besichte, an ber Seite feiner schwarzen Gattin, welche schwieg und gottsjäm= merlich gen himmel blickte, gewaltig auf.

Un der Küchenwand tollte eine schwarze Kate mit ihren Jungen unter tausend Sprüngen und Drehungen, während die Ratten oberhalb auf der Dachrinne spionirend und neugierig hervorlugten, vom Regenwasser tranken, die frische Luft einschlürften, und wieder

rubig unter bie Ziegelsteine gurudfrochen.

Die Fliegen rectten ihre Beine und begannen im

Sonnenschein zu luftwandeln.

Auf dem Hofe stand eine hohe Esche, in deren Gipfel sich ein Elsternest hin und her wiegte. Eine Menge Elstern hatten sich als Candidaten des Luftpalastes ein= gesunden, umslatterten denselben schreiend, und jagten einander, um ihn in Besitz zu nehmen, darum in die Runde. Endlich blieben zwei allein siegreich im Vogel= bau zurück. Da lachten sie, und füßten einander, vom Südwinde geschaufelt, unter dem lenzblauen Himmel. Die Vertriebenen trösteten sich damit, daß sie auf den Futtertrog des Hoshundes herabslogen, und daraus stahlen; der stolze Alsiero aber betrachtete sie, vor sei= nem Hause sitzend, mit hochmüthiger Ruhe.

Die Staare schlugen ihre Triller und ließen, indem sie sich auf den Dachpfannenspißen zusammenschaarten,

ihr melodisches Pfeifen ertonen.

Die Grashalme schüttelten im Winde die Regentro= pfen ab, und die kleine, den Singvögeln so liebe Stern= blume erhob ihr Haupt wieder zur Sonne und ward

vom Jubelgesang ber Lerche begrußt.

Die Gänse wackelten schnatternd über den Graßplat und rissen dessen junges Grün ab; dabei zeigte sich eisne in ihrer Gesellschaft vor sich gegangene Berändezung. Der Rausbold, (der weiße Gänserich) war zusfällig lahm geworden, und hatte dadurch seine Macht und sein Ansehen eingebüßt. Jett hätte der graue Gänserich die beste Gelegenheit gehabt, einen schonen Charafter, einen edlen Sinn zu entwickeln — aber nein! Nichts von dem zeigte der Graue, und wie der Weiße sich srüher gegen ihn benommen hatte, so bestrug er sich jest gegen diesen; er rectte den Hals gegen ihn aus, und hielt ihn mit Schreien und Beißen sern, und die Gänsedamen kümmerten sich gar nicht darum, und der Weiße mußte es sich gesallen lassen seinen Nebenbuhler in der Versammlung regieren zu

sehen, während er selbst hülflos und verachtet hinteran hinken mußte. Susanna entzog, als sie dieses sah, dem grauen Gänserich ihre ganze Freundschaft, ohne sie deshalb dem weißen in größerem Maaße zu schensten. Sie sah, daß Einer eben so viel taugte, als der Andere.

Sujanna fam gerabe von einem Besuche, ben fie in der Hütte eines Dienstmannes gemacht und wo sie der Frau beim Aufsetzen bes Gewebes und jetzt beim Abnehmen beffelben geholfen hatte, und ihr Angesicht glübte noch vor Freude über Die Scene, ber fie brinnen beigewohnt hatte. Die Ruh hatte nämlich gerabe an dem Morgen gefalbt, reichlich und schnell strömte die Milchquelle zur unaussprechlichen Freude für vier bleiche Knaben, welche jest zwischen Wonne barüber und Bewunderung bes fleinen, muntern, schwarz und weißgeflect= ten Kalbes getheilt waren; bei dem fleinsten der Buben war biese Bewunderung sogar mit Furcht vermischt. Das Gewebe behnte fich gleichfalls über alle Erwartung gut; Sufanna balf ber Bausfrau bie Rleibung auf bas Vassendste zuschneiden, und ihre aufmunternden Worte und ihre herzliche Theilnahme waren wie Sahne auf bem Milchtrühftud. Mit biefen schönen Gindruden auf ihre Seele fam Sufanna auf ben Sof in Semb, und wurde von Alfiero und bem gesammten Febervieh mit dem größten Jubel empfangen. Dazwischen hörte fie aber Geschrei und Klagelaut von Bögeln, und bies führte fie in ben Garten. Sier fab fie ein Staarpar= chen, bas voll Angstgeschrei um bie untersten 3meige eines Eichbaums flatterte. Um Fuße bes Baums regte nich etwas und hupfte schwach im Grafe, und Sufanna fah, daß es ein Staarküchlein war, welches sich zu früh aus bem Reste gewagt hatte und hinuntergefallen war; es erhob jest seine ichwachen Rlagelaute zu ben Aeltern, welche burch ihr Flattern eine graue Rate, beren lufterne Augen aus einem grünenden Vogelfirsch= Streit u. Frieden. 1.

busch hervorblickten, in Respekt halten zu wollen schie= nen. Sujanna jagte die Rate fort, hob ben kleinen Bogel auf und wärmte ihn an ihrem Busen. Sier= über beruhigten fich aber ber Staarpapa und die Star= mama feinesweges, im Gegentheil ihre Unruhe schien noch zuzunehmen. Sufanna hatte Dieselbe gern gestillt, als sie aber emporblickte und das Staarnest hoch oben im Eichenftamm, viele Ellen über ihrem Saupte fab, wußte fie fich feinen Rath. Da läutete es zum Mit= tagstische, wozu Alfiero auf die tragischste Weise heulte, und Harald kehrte an der Spitze seiner Arbeiter vom Felde zurud. Sufanna beeilte fich ihm ihre Noth mit= zutheilen und zeigte ihm ben kleinen Bogel. — "Geben Sie ihn her" — sagte Harald — "so will ich ihm den Bals umdreben, und wir fonnen einen fleinen Braten bavon zum Mittag bekommen."

"Nein! Können Sie so grausam sein?" rief Su-

fanna.

Harald lachte ohne zu antworten, sah zur Eiche empor, um das Nest aufzuspüren, und schwang sich darauf mit großer Leichtigkeit auf den Baum hinauf. Als er auf einem der untersten Zweige stand, beugte er sich zu Susannen hinab und sagte: "Geben Sie einmal her! ich werde ihn expediren." Susanna überließ ihm sett den Bogel ohne weitere Bemerkungen. Behend und leicht schwang Harald sich von Zweig zu Zweig, den Bogel in der Linken und von den schreienden Staarältern, welche um sein Haupt schrecklich umher rumveten, gefolgt. Die Alten waren gewiß höchlichst überzrascht, als der Junge unversehrt in's Nest gesetzt wurde, Susanne war es aber nicht so, und als Harald gewandt und warm vom Baume auf den Erdboden sprang, empsingen ihn Susanna's freundlichste Blicke und herzelichste Danksagungen.

In diesem Augenblicke kamen ein paar umherziehende Handelsleute mit ihren Karren auf den Hof, und wur-

ben von Harald, welcher einige Einkäufe besorgen zu haben vorgab und Susanna dabei um ihren Nath bat, bemerkt. Susanna war ein Frauenzimmer, und Frauenzimmer ertheilen gerne Nath — und zwar immer gu=

ten, bas versteht sich von selbst! -

Seit einiger Zeit hatte Harald öfters verschiedene Einkäuse gemacht und Susannen stets dabei zu Rathe gezogen; diese fand sich dadurch zwar etwas geschmeischelt; konnte aber nicht umhin, mitunter von Harald zu denken: er muß doch sehr egoistisch sein; immer denkt er an sich, immer käust er für sich und nie sür seine Schwester, von der er doch so viel spricht und auf die er so viel zu halten scheint, aber die Herren in Norwegen halten wohl am meisten auf sich selbst.

Diesmal schien Susanna gleichfalls Grund zu einer ähnlichen Bemerkung zu haben, denn es war fürchter= lich, wie Harald für sich selbst sorgte und wie viel er

für biefes fein Gelbft brauchte.

Dieses Damastdrells bedurfte er für seinen Tisch, vieses Muslins für sich, dieser Taschentücher für seine Nase u. s. w.

Susanna konnte nicht umbin, ihn auf die Probe zu

stellen, indem fie bei einem schönen Stoffe fagte:

"Wie schön! der wird gewiß Ihrer Schwester sehr

gut fteben." -

"Was? meiner Schwester!" — eiferte Harald — "nein! die kann sich ihre Kleider selbst anschaffen. Diessen Stoff brauche ich gerade zu meinem Sofa. Man ist sich selbst der nächste, man muß nothwendig doch auch ein wenig für sich seblst sorgen."

"So forgen Sie selbst für sich selbst! Ich habe keine Zeit!" sagte Susanna ganz bose, wandte ihm und sei=

nen Waaren ben Rucken und ging.

10.

Lenzempfindungen.

Fort weht der Himmel auf Lenzwolken dort Milde Gedanken in's Blumenke'chdunkel, Drum bei der Kelche Erschließungsgefunkel Flüstert's von Blättern wie heimliches Wort.

Belhaven.

Der Mai schreitet vorwärts und nähert sich dem Juni. Von ihren Nestern in den luftigen, laubumkränzeten Grotten, welche ihnen die Mutter Natur in hohen Eichen und Eschen bereitet hat, entsenden die Staare ihr tieses, sanstönendes Pfeisen, ihre lieberfüllten Triller. Sang und Duft erfüllen Norwegens Wälder. Das Bauernmädchen wandert mit den Viehheerden zu den Sennenthälern empor und singt fröhlich:

"Zur Senne zu ziehen ist schön und fein, Romm, Heerde mein! Komm Ruh, komm Kalb, kommt Groß und Klein Zur Hürd' herein! —"

Die Frühlingsarbeit war zu Ende, die Saaten wuchfen unter der Obhut des Himmels. Harald hatte jest
öfters freie Zeit, von der er Susannen einen großen Theil widmete. Er lehrte sie die Blumen des Thals,
deren Namen und Eigenschaften kennen, und ergöste
sich eben so sehr über ihr Radbrechen der lateinischen
Namen, als er von der Schnelligkeit, mit welcher sie
deren ökonomischen und medicinischen Nußen auffaßte,
erbaut war.

Das Thal mit seinen Schönheiten ward ihr immer bekannter und lieber. Sie ging jest wieder Morgens zur Quelle hinab, wo Marienmäntelchen und Silberwurz so üppig wuchsen, und ließ die gestederte Schaar sich daselbst baden und erlustigen. An den Sonntags-

nachmittagen ftellte fie mitunter eine Wandrung zu ei= nem Sain von Gichen und wilben Sagebuttenftrauchern am Fuße eines Sügels, ber Kryftallberg genannt wurde und in ben Abendsonnenstrahlen in wunderbarem Glanze schimmerte, an. Zuweilen begleitete Barald fie dahin und erzählte viele wunderbare Sagen von Hulbran, ber im Berge wohnte, von ben Zwergen, welche die sechseckigen Krystalle, die beshalb auch "Zwerg= ichmiebestangen" genannt werben, schliffen, von ber Welt und bem Wesen ber "Unterirdischen," wie ber Vorzeit reiche Phantafie es geschaffen, und wie es noch in bem heimlichen Glauben bes nordischen Bolfes bunkel fortlebt. Sufanna's lebhafter Sinn faßte bies Alles mit bem größten Interesse auf. Sie träumte sich in Die iconen Arnstallfale bes Berges hinein, fie glaubte Red's Gefang im Brausen bes Stroms zu hören, unb Baume und Blumen wurden für fie immer ichoner, immer lebenbiger, wenn fie Elfen und Zauberzwerge aus ihnen reben zu hören glaubte.

Aus der Prosa ihres Lebens und ihrer Beschäftigung erwuchs eine Poesieblüthe, halb Wirklichkeit, halb Mähr= chen, welche einen milden Glanz in ihre Seele goß.

Susanna war übrigens nicht die Einzige, auf welche bieser Frühling wohlthätig wirkte. Die bleiche Frau Astrid schien sich aus ihrem sinsteren Sindrüten zu ersheben und aus der lenzfrischen Lust neue Lebenskraft zu schöpfen. Sie ging mitunter, wenn die Sonne warm schien, aus, und man sah sie ganze Stunden auf einem moosbewachsenen Steine im Walde, am Fuße des Arnstallberges sizen. Als Susanna bemerkte, daß sie diesen Ort zu lieben schien, brachte sie ganz heimelich Schollen mit blühenden Linne'en und die dustige, einblüthige Pyrola dahin, und sie setzte dieselben so ein, daß der Südwind deren liebliche Düste gerade dorthin, wo Frau Astrid saß, wehen mußte. Susanna empfand eine wehmüthige Freude bei dem Gedanken,

daß dieser balsamische Hauch ihrer Gerrin Zeuge einer Zuneigung, die sich auf keine andere Art zu offenbaren

wagte, sein würde.

Susanna wäre, wenn sie zu dieser Zeit in ihrer Gebieterin Seele blicken und einen Brief, den diese schrieb, und von dem wir ein Fragment mittheilen wollen, lesen gekonnt hätte, reichlich belohnt worden.

An den Bischof S.

"Liebe ermüdet nicht! das mußte ich mir heute "sagen, als ich Ihren Brief erhielt und von Ih=
"ver Güte, Ihrer himmlischen Geduld erfüllt
"wurde! Und Sie werden Derjenigen nicht über=
"drüssig, die sich beinahe selbst zum Ueberdrusse
"ist — und immer derselbe Hoffnungsfrühling,
"derselbe felsenseste schöne Glaube! Ach! wäre
"ich Ihrer Freundschaft doch würdiger — aber
"ich kann Ihnen heute ein Wort der Freude sa"gen, und das will ich Ihnen nicht vorenthalten."

"Sie wollen wissen, wie es um mich steht?—
"Besser! seit einiger Zeit athme ich freier. Stille
"Tage sind mir vorüber gewandert, milde Sterne
"haben auf mein Haupt hernieder geschaut; der
"Gießbach hat meinen Nächten sein Wiegenlied
"vorgesungen, bis es mich in Schlaf gelullt hat,
"und ich ruhiger und wohler geworden bin. Der
"Lenz äußert sogar auf mich seinen wohlthätigen
"Einfluß. Alles erhebt sich so groß, so reich an
"Leben und Schönheit um mich her, ich vergesse
"mich bisweilen um zu bewundern. Es ist über
"breißig Jahre her, daß ich auf dem Lande ge=
"wohnt habe."

"Mitunter steigen Gefühle, welche dem Lenz"wehen gleichen, in mir auf, dann empfinde ich "gleichsam einen leisen Trost dabei, daß ich wäh"rend meines langwierigen Kampfes doch stets

"Ich gebe bisweilen aus und fite bann gerne "in einem Schönen Gichenhaine unten im Thale "und milbe wohlthuende Empfindungen beschlei= "den mich bort. Der Wind weht mir unaus= "sprechlich linde Dufte zu, welche mich an die "Welt von wohlthuenden, heilenden, ftarfenden "Kräften, die um mich her, und zwar so heimlich, "so anspruchlos und sich nur durch ihre Wohl-"geruche, ihre ftille Schonheit verrath, auffeimt, "benten machen. Dort, am Fuße bes Berges faß "ich heute Abend. Die Sonne neigte fich zum "Untergang, schien aber warm im Saine; un= "fern von mir weibeten einige Schafe mit ih= "ren zarten Lämmchen; sie fahen mich verwun= "bert aber furchtlos an, ein Glöcken schellte rein "und leicht, während fie über ben grünen Plan "hin und herwandelten; es war so ftill und ru= "hig, baß ich bie fleinen Insetten, welche im "Grase zu meinen Fugen summten, borte, und "mich beschlich, ich weiß nicht, welches Gefühl "von Wohlbehagen und Luft. Da genoß ich bas "Dafein, wie es bie Lammer und Infekten ge= "noffen - ich fann also noch genießen! Milbe, "reiche Ratur! an beinem Bergen fonnte bas "meinige vielleicht noch — aber ba fteht ber blei= "che, blutige Knabe, — ba steht der Mörder "ewig zwischen mir und meinem Seelenfrieden!

"Würbe ich zuweilen Ihre Stimme hören Ihren "flaren, tröstenden Blick sehen, so könnte ich viel=
"leicht noch lernen — empor zu schauen. Aber
"ich lade Sie nicht zu mir ein. Ach! ich wünschte
"Niemanden in meiner Nähe zu sehen. Sei'n
"Sie doch nicht mehr so besorgt um mich, mein
"Freund. Mir ist besser. Ich habe gute Men=
"schen, die mein äußeres Leben ruhig und behag=
"lich machen, um mich. Lassen Sie, wie bisher
"auch fernerhin, Ihren liebevollen Gedanken zu=
"weilen auf mir verweilen, vielleicht daß er einst=
"mals Licht in mein Herz strahlen wird!" —

11.

Mann und Weib.

Ein neuer Streit.

-Ich will schon zeigen, was ich für ein Kerl bin!- "Mein Herr — ich bin erstaunt."
Siful Sifadda.

Wir haben gesehen, daß Harald eben so wenig, als Griselda's seliger Mann, ein wie Del rubig dahinstiespendes Leben zu lieben schien. Vielleicht glaubte er, daß sein Umgang mit Susanna jetzt eine solche Richtung zu nehmen schien, und deshalb nahm er sich, vielleicht eines Tages da er als Menschenfeind ihr Grausen nicht mehr erwecken konnte, vor, sie als Weisberthrann auszureizen.

"Dieser Tage erwarte ich meine Schwester hier — sagte er, wie hingeworfen, eines Abends zu Susannen; ich bedarf ihrer um etwas für mich nähen und meine Sachen in Ordnung bringen zu lassen. Alette ist ein

gutes liebes Mädchen, und ich bin Sinnes, sie, bis ich mich verheirathe und von meiner Frau bedient werden kann, bei mir zu behalten."

"Bon Ihrer Frau bebient?" rief Sufanna, man fann

nich leicht vorstellen in welchem Tone, aus.

"Natürlich! — Das Weib ist geschaffen, dem Manne unterthänig zu sein, und ich gedenke nicht meiner Frau etwas zu schenken. Ich gedenke, Herr in meinem Hause zu sein."

"Die norwegischen Herren muffen ja mahre Despoten,

Tyrannen, Beiben und Turfen fein."

"Jeden Morgen, Bunkt sechs Uhr muß meine Frau aufstehen und meinen Kasse kochen."

"Wenn fie aber nun nicht will?"

"Nicht will? Ich will ihr schon rathen, zu wollen, und will sie nicht mit Gutem, so soll sie mit Bösent. Ich dulde keinen Ungehorsam und das denke ich ihr ganz ernsthaft beizubringen, und wenn sie das nicht probiren will, so rathe ich ihr um sechs Uhr aufzu=stehen, meinen Kaffe zu kochen und ihn mir an's Bett zu bringen."

"Nein, so etwas habe ich noch nie gehört! Sie sind ber aller — Gott gnade den verheiratheten Frauen=

zimmern in diesem unseligen Lande."

"Und gutes Essen soll sie mir alle Tage zubereiten, sonst — geht es nicht gut mit uns; und sie soll mir nicht mehr als einmal alle vierzehn Tage mit der "Armengelegenheit*)" kommen, und dann soll es recht saftig schmecken."

"Wenn Sie faftig effen wollen, so muffen Sie auch

saftiges Saushaltungsgelb geben."

"Damit werde ich mich nicht abgeben, dafür muß meine Frau sorgen. Sie muß Vorrath für die Wirthschaft schaffen, wie sie kann."

^{*)} So heißt ein Gericht das aus den Ueberresten der Woche bereitet und gewöhnlich am Sonnabend aufgetischt wird.

"Ich hoffe, daß Sie nie eine Frau ober bann eine

wahre Xantippe befommen."

"Dafür gibt es Rath; dafür soll sie mir, um gleich damit anzufangen, jeden Abend die Stiefel ausziehen. Alles beruht darauf, daß man bei Zeiten anfängt seine Person zu sichern, denn von Natur sind die Frauenzimmer schrecklich herrschsüchtig. —"

"Gerade weil die Männer Tyrannen find. —"

"Und dabei fürchterlich fleinlich!"

"Weil die Herren alles Große für sich genommen haben."

"Und babei fehr launisch."

"Weil die Männer von Arroganz vollgepfropft sind."

"Und unbeständig."

"Weil die Männer keiner Beständigkeit werth sind."
"Und eigensinnig und heftig!"

"Weil die Manner unvernünftig find."

"Aber ich — fuhr Harald sehr scharf fort — halte nichts von eigensinnigen, heftigen und herrschssüchtigen Frauenzimmern. Im Allgemeinen sind es gerade die Männer, welche das weibliche Geschlecht verwöhnen, sie sind zu geduldig, zu folgsam, zu gefällig. Aber in meinem Hause soll es anders zugehen. Ich werde meine Frau nicht verwöhnen; sie soll sich gerade gewöhnen, geduldig, nachgebend und zuvorkommend gegen mich zu sein, und dazu denke ich auch meine liebe Schwester anzuhalten; sie mag nur ja nicht etwa erwarten, daß ich mich ihretwegen von der Stelle rühre — sie braucht nicht zu — "

In diesem Augenblicke hörte man ein Fuhrwerk auf den Hof fahren und vor der Thüre halten. Harald sah aus dem Fenster, that einen Schrei der Ueberraschung und Freude, und schoß wie ein Pseil aus dem Zimmer. Susanna sah jeht gleichfalls neugierig zum Fenster hinaus und erblickte Harald, wie er eben aus einem Wagen ein Frauenzimmer hob, das er darauf

lange und innig in seine Arme schloß, und sie nur ließ, um ihr die Schachteln und Packete, die sie hinaufetragen wollte, abzunehmen, und sich damit zu belasten.

Ja so — dachte Susanna bei sich — steht es so um seine Thrannei? — Mit der sesten Ueberzeugung, daß die, welche Harald so empfangen hatte, seine Schwester war, ging sie an die Küche und traf Anstalten

zum Alebendssen.

Als sie in das allgemeine Wohnzimmer zurückfehrte, fand sie die Geschwister daselbst vor. Mit leuchtenden Blicken stellte Harald Susannen: "meine Schwester Allette" vor; darauf sing er an mit ihr zu tanzen, zu lachen und zu singen. Noch nie hatte Susanna ihn so

von Bergen froh gefeben.

Bei der Abendmahlzeit hatte Harald nur Augen für seine Schwester, er spielte ihr zwar einen oder den ansdern Possen, wosür sie ihn ausschalt, aber das schien ihn erst recht dazu aufzumuntern. Die Obristin hatte an diesem Abend ihr Zimmer nicht verlassen, und Harald konnte sich desto freier mit Alette beschäftigen. Nach dem Abendessen setzte er sich neben sie aufs Sofa und erinnerte sie, ihre Hand in die seinige schliesend, an ihre Jugendtage und wie sie damals einander gar nicht so recht leiden konnten.

"Du warst auch unerträglich maliziös."

"Und du unerträglich vornehm und superklug. Erinnerst du dich noch, wie wir uns immer beim Frühstück zankten — das heißt wie ich zankte, denn du antwortetest niemals viel; sondern benahmst dich so überklug und hoffärtig, weil du damals etwas länger aufgeschossen warst, als ich.

"Und ich erinnere mich, wie du mitunter das Feld räumtest, das Frühstück verließest und Muttern klag= test, du könnest es mit meinen vornehmen Mienen nicht

aushalten."

"Ja, wenn mir bas nur was geholfen hätte, aber ich

bekam weiter nichts zu hören, als: Alette ist weit versständiger, als Du! Alette ist weit ordentlicher, als Du! Alette weiß viel mehr, als Du! — das schmeckte mir recht sauer, dasür aß ich auch dein Konfekt auf."

"Ja, du boser Bube, das thatest du, und wolltest mir noch obendrein weismachen, daß es eine Maus gethan

hätte."

"Ja ich war ein unnützer, ungezogener, naseweiser, unausstehlicher Bube."

"Und ich ein sauertöpfisches, altkluges, eingebildetes und redseliges Mädchen; für jeden Streich, den du mir

spieltest, gab ich bir einen Moralfuchen."

"Nicht einen, liebe Schwefter, sondern sieben und darüber; es war ungeheuer!" — rief Harald lachend und Alettens Hand küssend. — "aber" — fuhr er fort — "sie thaten noth und waren wohlverdient, aber ich, Unwürdiger, war doch ein klein wenig froh, als ich ihrer, indem ich zur Akademie reiste, loswurde.

"Ich war auch gar nicht traurig darüber, meine Nähereien und Sachen in Frieden zu haben, als du aber nach drei Jahren wieder heimkehrtest, hatte sich das Blatt gewendet, da war es ganz anders — da ward

ich ordentlich stolz auf meinen Bruder."

"Und ich gleichfalls auf meine Schwester. Weißt du was, Alette, ich glaube, du wirst am Besten thun mit Lexow zu brechen; ich kann dich wirklich nicht missen; bleibe bei mir, statt mit ihm nach dem regnigen, winzigen und kalten Norden, der dir doch nicht gefällt, zu ziehen."

"Darüber müssen wir Lerow fragen, lieber Bruder!" So ward das Gespräch noch lange fortgesett, und ward nach und nach ernster und leiser. Die Geschwister schienen von ihrer Zukunft zu sprechen, und das ist immer eine ernsthafte Sache, aber dann und wann brach ein herzliches Gelächter aus den stillen Berathunsen hervor. Mitternacht war herangerückt, aber Keiner schien es zu bemerken.

Sujanna batte fid, mahrend ber Unterrebung ber Geschwifter, in bas nächste Gemach zurückgezogen, um ihnen so mehr Freiheit zu lassen. Ihre Bruft ward von ungekannten wehmuthigen Gefühlen zusammenge= idnurt. Die Stirn gegen Die fublen Wenfterscheiben gelehnt, fab fie in ben sommerschönen Abend hinaus und lauschte zugleich ben milben traulichen Stimmen brinnen. Die Dämmerung wob ihre fanftbufteren Schleier über Thal, Baum und Flur, über Soben und Chenen; Simmel und Erbe schienen sich in stiller Traulich= feit aneinander zu schmiegen. Im Grase ichlummerten Die Blumen einanderzunickend, und aus bem Laub, bas leise aneinander fäuselte, glaubte fie bie Worte: Bruder! Schwester! flüsternd zu hören. In unsäglicher Sehn= sucht öffnete fie ihre Urme, als wolle fie Jemanden ba= mit umfangen; als fie aber leer wieder an ihren Bu= fen herabsanken, rollten Schmerzenszähren über ihre Wangen und ihre Lippen stammelten leife bebend: "Meine kleine Sulda!"

Rleine Hulda, Deine Lieblichkeit, Deine lichten Locken in Chren! aber ich glaube nicht, daß Schwester Susanna's Thränen jest nur allein Dir flossen! —

12.

In des Auges flarer Well' Geh ich Kerzenglanz sich sviegeln, Schwebt ein Engel auf den Flügeln, Blickt es gleichfalls mild und hell. Belbaven.

Als Susanna am nächsten Morgen zu Alette in's Zimmer trat, um sich zu erkundigen, wie sie geschlafen

habe u. f. w., fand sie Sarald schon bei ber Schwester vor, welcher die Zeuge, Hals= und Taschentücher, Tisch= decken u. s. w., welche er, wie er zu Susannen gesagt, für sich gefauft hatte, die aber eigentlich zu Geschenken für ihre bevorstehehende Hochzeit bestimmt waren, ausgebreitet hatte. Raum war Susanna einge= treten, so vereinten zu ihrer größten Überraschung Bru-ber und Schwester ihre Bitten bahin: sie möge ben schönen Stoff zum Kleide, den einst Harald ihrem Borschlage gemäß für feine Schwester faufen follte, anneh= men. Sie erröthete und lehnte es ab, fonnte aber Sa= ralds herzlichkeit nicht wiederstehen und nahm endlich, obgleich sie nicht froh darüber war, das Geschenk dank-bar an. Das Weinen war ihr nahe und sie fühlte sich in mehr als einer Sinsicht arm. Als Harald bald darauf hinaus ging, ergoß sich Alette in eine herzliche Lobrede auf ihn, und schloß mit den Worten: "Ja, man kann sich wohl zehnmal des Tages über ihn ärgern, ebe man ihn ganz genau fennen lernt, aber bas ift gewiß, daß man, wenn er will, nicht von ihm loskommt, ehe man ihn nicht liebt." Susanna lauschte stumm Allettens Worten und ihr Herz schlug in zugleich ange-nehmen und schmerzlichen Gefühlen. Eine Meldung, baß bas Frühftuck fertig fei, machte bem Gefprach ein Enbe.

Alette war einige und zwanzig Jahre alt, und hatte den schönen Wuchs, die reine Hautsarbe, die seinen Büge, womit Mutter Natur vorzugsweise ihre Töchter in Norwegen bedacht zu haben scheint. In ihrem ganzen Aussehen lag etwas Feines, Durchsichtiges und der Körper schien nur eine leichte Hülle der lebensvollen Seele zu sein. Ihre Art zu sein und zu reden, hatte etwas sehr Einnehmendes und verrieth glückliche Naturgaben und viele Bildung. Sie war mit einem vermögenden Kausmanne aus den Nordmarken verlobt und sollte sich in diesem Herbste verheirathen, war aber

gekommen, um vorher noch einige Zeit bei ihrem Bruder und einem anderen nahen Verwandten in Hallings=

thal hinzubringen.

Susanna war in Alettens Gegenwart etwas schüch= tern, neben diesem feinen, halbätherischen Wesen regte sich in ihr zum ersten Male das unbehagliche Gefühl

ihrer Unbeholfenheit.

Von ber Stunde ab, in welcher Alette nach Semb gekommen war, ging baselbst eine gewisse Veränderung vor sich. Ihr angenehmes Wesen und gesellschaftlichen Talente machten fle bald zum allgemeinen Bereinigungs= mittelpunkt; fogar Frau Aftrid erfuhr ihren Ginfluß, fie blieb des Abends bei den Abrigen und nahm an ben Gesprächen, welche Alette interessant zu machen ver= stand, Antheil. Aber die Obristin selbst trug nicht wenig dazu bei, wenn sie sich mitunter im Gespräch gleichsam selbst vergaß, und dann oftmals Worte, welche von einer tieffühlenden und bentenben Seele zeugten, äußerte, wobei fie von Susanna mit Frende und Bewunderung betrachtet wurde. Oft aber schien ein quä= lender Gedanke sie diesen freundlichen Eindrücken zu entreißen, eine dustere Erinnerung schien spukhast zwi= schen sie und die Freude zu treten, die Worte erstarr= ten auf ihren bleichwerdenden Lippen, ihre Sand fuhr an's Berg und fie horte und fühlte nicht was um fie her vorging, bis das Interesse des Gesprächs sie wie= berum zu feffeln vermochte.

Oft ward vorgelesen. Alette besaß darin ein wirklisches Talent und es war ein Genuß von ihren Lippen Dichtungen von Belhaven und Wergeland (die, beide noch junge Männer, wenn auch persönlich verfeindet, einander brüderlich die Hand darin reichen, daß sie ihr Vaterland aufrichtig lieben und dessen Literatur mansches Schöne und Veredelnde geschenkt haben) zu hören.

Inzwischen ward Susanna immer minder wohl zu Muth. Harald suchte nicht mehr, wie früher, ihre Ge=

sellschaft, und schien sie über Alette beinahe gänzlich vergessen zu haben. In den Gesprächen, welche sie oft anhörte, lag Vieles, welches ihre Gefühle berührte, welches Fragen und Ahnungen in ihr erweckte, wenn sie aber etwas von diesen äußern wollte, wenn sie gern auch mit dabei sein und zeigen wollte, daß auch sie benken und sprechen könnte, da kamen die Worte so schlecht und die Gedanken so unklar heraus, daß sie selbst sich derselben schämen mußte, besonders wenn Allettens Augen sich dabei etwas verwundert auf sie richteten und Harald die seinigen niederschlug, dann nahm sie sich vor, nie mehr den Mund in Sachen, von denen sie nichts verstand, zu öffnen.

Dies griff sie sehr an, und in ihrer Demüthigung beklagte sie bitterlich den Mangel an einer besseren Erziehung und seufzte aus der Tiefe ihres Herzens: "Ach, wer doch etwas mehr wüßte! wer doch zum Mindesten

irgend ein schönes Talent befäße."

13.

Ein Abend in der Wohnstube.

Und ist es erst Morgen, so wird es auch Tag, Denn das Licht wird stets triumphiren.

voli.

Es war ein schöner Sommerabend. Durch die geöffneten Fenster der Wohnstube strömte die milde Sommerluft mit den Düsten des Heues, das jetzt schwadenweise im Thale lag, geschwängert. An einem Tische
bereitete Susanna den dampfenden Thee, den die Norweger beinahe eben so lieben als die Engländer, an einem anderen saßen Frau Astrid, Harald und Alette,
mit dem unlängst erschienenen, schönen Werke: "Snorre

Sturleson's Nordische Königssagen, a. d. Isländischen übertragen, von J. Aal," beschäftigt. Das vierte Heft derselben lag bei der Abtheilung: "Entdeckung Wieslands" vor Harald aufgeschlagen. Er hatte gerade Aal's interessante Einleitung zu den Sagen von Erich dem Rothen und Karlessne vorgelesen, und fuhr jest fort die beiden Sagen selbst, welche Berichte von der ersten Entdeckung Amerikas enthalten, und von denen wir dier einen kurzen Auszug geben, vorzulesen:

denen wir hier einen kurzen Auszug geben, vorzulesen:
"Am Schlusse bes zehnten Jahrhunderts, zur Zeit als die Normänner in ihren kriegerischen Wikingersfahrten den Süden heimsuchten, und das Christenthum mit dem Evangelium des Friedens sich gegen den Norden hin ausbreitete, wohnte auf Island ein angesehemer Mann, Namens Serjulf. Sein Sohn hieß Bjarne, und war ein tüchtiger junger Mann. Sein Sinn stand schon frühzeitig nach Reisen und Abenteuern. Bald ershielt er auch ein eignes Schiff zu führen und suhr das mit außer Landes. Als er eines Sommers zu seiner vaterländischen Insel zurücksehrte, war sein Bater kurz zuvor nach Grönland fortgezogen und hatte sich daselbst häuslich niedergelassen. Da stach Bjarne wieder in See, indem er sagte: er wolle nach alter Sitte die Winterkost bei seinem Vater einnehmen und nach Grönsland fahren.

Nachdem sie drei Tage zur See gewesen waren, sprang ein heftiger Nordostwind auf, den ein so dicker Nebel begleitete, daß Bjarne und seine Mannschaft nicht mehr wußten, wo sie sich befanden. Dieses hielt viele Tage an; späterhin sahen sie die Sonne wieder und konnten die Simmelsgegenden erkennen, da sahen sie ein waldbewachsenes Land, mit unbedeutenden Unshöhen vor sich liegen. Bjarne wollte dort nicht landen, da dies Grönland, wo sich, wie er wußte, große Schneesberge befänden, nicht sein konnte Sie segelten nun drei Tage lang mit Südwestwind weiter, und bekamen

ein anderes Land, welches gebirgig war und hohe Schneefelsen hatte, zu Gesichte. Aber Bjarne hielt auch dieses nicht für Grönland, sondern segelte weiter, bis er
endlich das Land, welches er suchte, und den Hof seines Vaters fand.

"Alls Bjarne ben Jarl Erik in Norwegen besuchte, erzählte er von seiner Fahrt und ben fremden Ländern, Die er gefehen hatte. Den Leuten fam es vor, als fei er nicht besonders wißbegierig gewesen, ba er nicht mehr von biesen Ländern zu erzählen wußte, und bies ward ihm zur Last gelegt. Erichs des Rothen Sohn, Leif, aus einem eblen Beschlecht entsprossen, ward bei Bjarnes Mittheilung begierig, Die Entbedung zu verfolgen; er kaufte von ihm ein Schiff, in bas er fünf und dreißig Mann nahm, und fo in See ging, um bas neue Land aufzusuchen. Zuerft kamen sie zu einem Lande , welches voll von Schnee und Bergen war, und ihnen "ohne alle Herrlichkeit" zu sein schien, dar= auf sahen sie ein anderes, dessen Strand weißer Sand, und dessen Boden mit Wald bewachsen war.*) Sie segelten noch weiter nach Westen, und famen zu einem herrlichen Land, wo fie Weintrauben, Mais und ben eblen Maserbaum fanden. Diefes Land **) nannten sie "Winland," bauten baselbst Häuser, und blieben bort während des Winters, der so milbe war, daß das Gras kaum verwelkte; auch waren Tage und Rächte von gleicherer Länge, als auf Island und Gron= land. Und Leif war ein großer, ftarker Gerr von mann= lichem Aussehen, so wie auch verständig und flug in allen Stücken.

"Er nahm, nach diesem Zuge, an Ansehen wie an Vermögen zu, und ward allgemein "ber Glückliche" genannt."

"Unter ben, auf Leif's Bug folgenden Fahrten nach

^{*)} Wahrscheinlich Reufundland.

^{**)} Ralifornien.

bem neuen Lande, ift die Karlefne's bie merkwürdigste; aber theils fuchten schwere Rrantheiten Die im Entfte= ben begriffenen Kolonieen beim, theils zog wohl auch bas ben Nordländern eigenthümliche Beimweh fie von ben Trauben Winlands in ihr schneeige Beimath zu= ruck; - so viel ift ausgemacht, bag fie in ber neuen Welt feine bleibenbe Stätte behielten; auch wurden fie oft von ben Eingebornen, welche ihre Waffen nicht im

Stande waren abzuhalten, angefallen.

"Inzwischen haben mehre isländische Chronifenschrei= ber vermerkt, bag Amerika in jedem Jahrhunderte, von Leif's Enbeckung bis zu Kolumbus von Normannern besucht worden ist. Beweise und Erinnerungen ihrer Fahrten haben wir nur noch in biefen Berichten und in bem merfwurdigen jest "Dighton's writing rock" genannten Steine am Ufer bes Fluffes Taunton in Daffachusetts, beffen, zulett von amerikanischen Gelehr= ten im Jahre 1830 abgezeichnete, Runen und Hierogly= phen eine weitere Befräftigung ber Wahrheit jener

Berichte geben."

"Ueber biese Figuren kommentirte Barald jett mit großem Fleiß, indem er erzählte, wie man noch ahn= liche in Norwegen auf alten "Bergftuben," Grabfteinen u. f. w. fande. "Siehst Du, Alette" — fuhr er eifrig fort - "bieses foll eine Frau mit einem fleinen Rinde vorstellen, wahrscheinlich Karlefne's Gattin, die wäh= rend ihres Aufenthaltes in Winland einen Sohn ge= bar. - Diefes bier foll ein Stier fein, und in Rar= lefne's Sage wird von einem Stier, ber bie Eingeborenen burch sein Brüllen erschreckte, erzählt; und biefe Figuren, weiter zur rechten Seite bin, ftellen Urbewohner vor. Dies ba foll ein Schild, und biefe Runenbuchstaben fein.

"Bu allem biefem braucht es eine ftarte Phantafie, lieber Bruder — unterbrach ihn Alette, Die burchaus nicht so patriotisch war als Haralb - aber wir wol= len fogar zugeben, baf es Amerikas erfte Entbedung

durch unsere Vorsahren beweist — was ist es dann mehr? Welchen Nutzen, was für Gutes hat die Welt davon? Ist es nicht noch eher traurig, zu sehen, daß so wichtige Entdeckungen verloren gehen könnten, als ob sie niemals dagewesen wären, und aufs Neue gemacht werden müßten? Hätte nicht Kolumbus einige Jahrhunderte später der Engherzigkeit der Menschen und den noch undurchmessenen Räumen des Weltmeers getroßt, so wüßten wir vielleicht nichts von Amerika und von dem Steine, der Spur unserer Ahnen in dem fremden Lande."

"Aber, meine süße Alette — rief Harald verwundert aus — ist es nicht sonnenklar, daß Kolumbus, ohne die Winlandssahrten der Normänner, gewiß nicht auf den Gedanken gekommen wäre, ein Land drüben über dem großen Meere zu suchen? Zur Zeit, als Kolumbus lebte, fuhren die Normänner mit ihren Schnecken (Schiffen) nach allen europäischen Küsten, auch nach Spanien zogen sie hin, und mit ihnen das Gerücht von den Winlandssahrten. Uebrigens — und das ist merkenswerth, besuchte Kolumbus selbst Island wenige Jahre vor seiner großen Entdeckungsreise, und zwar, wie Nobertson sagt, mehr um seine Kenntnisse im Seewesen, als um sein Vermögen zu vermehren."

"Aber, — sagte Alette — Washington Irving in seinem "Kolumbus," den ich neulich las — spricht wohl von seiner Fahrt nach Island, gibt aber nicht zu, daß er von dort irgend einen Anlaß zu seiner großen

Entbeckung befam."

"Aber das ist ja nach dem, was wir hier sehen und hören, unglaublich, unmöglich! höre nur zu, was Aal von der Zeit, in welcher Kolumbus auf Island versweilte, sagte:

"Auf Island blühte damals die Sagenschrift, und "die verschiedenen Ueberlieserungen gingen in verschie-"denen Abschriften von Hand zu Hand, und dienten "damals wie noch jest, nur in höherem Grade, dazu "die langen Winterabende zu verfürzen. Unsere alte "Sagenschrift entzündete also gewiß ein Licht in seinen "dunklen Ahnungen, und dies mußte ihm den Weg um "so mehr erhellt haben, als er dem Ereignisse selbst "nahe war, und zum Theil von denen, welche in ges"rader Linie von den Entdeckern abstammten, mündlich "mitgetheilt werden konnte."

"Ist das nicht ganz natürlich, nicht nothwendig? Kannst du noch länger zweifeln, Alette? Ich bitte dich, kehre um und bessere Dich, bekehre Dich von Irving

zu Alal!"

"Ich bin geneigt auf Haralb's Seite zu treten fagte Frau Aftrid mit lebhafter Stimme und eben fol= chen Bliden. - Große, fur Die Menschheit wichtige Entbedungen, find nie ohne Borbereitungen gemacht, find oft Jahrhunderte lang im Stillen fortgefett mor= ben, bis ber Sauch bes Genies und bes Gludes bas unter ber Afche glimmende Feuer in einer glücklichen Stunde zu einer hellen, die Welt erleuchtenden Gluth angeweht hat. Ueberall, wo wir eine Blume finden, können wir auf einen Stamm, auf in der Erde ver= borgene Wurzeln, und endlich auf ein, das werdende Gewächs noch unentwickelt in seinem dunklen Schooße verschließendes Samenkorn hinabsehen. Und bewegt sich benn nicht etwa Alles in ber Welt nach einem und bemfelben Entwicklungsgeset ? In ber fturmischen De= belfahrt der Mormanner sehe ich das fturmverwehte Samenforn, bas unter ber Leitung ber Vorsehung seine Wurzeln von Winlands Boben Jahrhunderte lang ausbehnte, bis ein mächtiger Benius von ihnen getrie= ben ward bas Werf zu vollenben, und ber alten Welt bie neue zu entbecken."

Harald freute sich sehr über diesen Gedanken, der seine Segel mit frischem Winde schwellte, und hier- burch belebt, machte et der in seiner Brust heimischen

Bewunderung des nordischen Alterthums Luft. "Es war — sagte er — diesen Männern von wenigen Worten, aber von kräftigen Thaten, diesen Männern, denen die Gefahr ein Spiel, der Sturm Musik, und Wogendrang ein Tanz war, diesem Jünglingsgeschlechte, sage ich, war es gegeben, neue Welten zu entdecken, ohne es als eine große That anzusehen. Ungeheure Thaten waren ihre Alltagsbeschäftigungen."

Allette schüttelte ihr schönes Köpschen bei dieser Entzückung über das Alterthum. Sie wollte nicht läugnen, daß jene Zeit eine gewisse Größe besaß, aber sie fand dieselbe nicht wahrhaft groß. Sie sprach von der Rachsucht, der Gewaltthätigkeit, der niedrigen Graufamkeit, welchen das nordische Alterthum ganz offen

huldigte.

"Aber — nahm Harald wieder das Wort — Die Schmerzen = und Todesverachtung, diese unter ben Men= schen jener Zeit so allgemeine, eble Verachtung, benahm ber Grausamkeit ihren Stachel. Unser verweichlichtes Geschlecht hat kaum eine Vorstellung von ber Kraft, welche die Alten in den Schmerzen felbst einen Genuß finden ließ, indem sie ihren muthigen Beift zur höch= ften Sohe bes Bervismus anspornten, und in solchen Stunden fühlten, baß fie mehr als Menschen fein konn= ten. Darum singen bie Selden inmitten ber Tobes= qualen; so stirbt ber Schwede Hjalmar in den Armen seines Freundes, des Norwegers Obd, indem er die Adler welche, um sein Blut zu trinken, nahen, begrüßt, so stirbt Regner Lobbrog in ber Schlangenhöhle, und während die Schlangen sich zischend in sein Berg ein= nagen, besingt er feine Siege und schließt mit ben Worten.

Lauf des Lebens ist geendet, Lachend sterb ich jest.

Wie ist diese Kraft im Schmerz, im Tode edel und bewundrungswerth.

"Ach, wer boch auch so sterben könnte!" -

"Auch die robeiten Wilden Amerika's"- fagte Alette-"fennen und üben biefe Art von Beroismus, mir aber schwebt ein anderes Ideal so wohl vom Leben, als vom Tobe, vor. Der ftarte Beift ber Borgeit, ben Du, lie= ber Bruder, so sehr rühmft, konnte boch nicht bas Al= ter, die schweren Tage, bas stille Leiben, ben großen Theil ber menschlichen Bestimmung ertragen — furz er verstand nicht zu bulben. Ich preise ben Geift, ber bie Menschheit in allen Lagen erhebt, ber ben fterben= ben Belben befeuert, Gott - nicht aber fich felbst zu preisen und bann zu fterben, ich preise ben Geift, ber bem Beringen, im Dunkel bes Lebens feinem unbemerkten Grabe Zuwandernden eine Kraft, einen Frieben, ber ibn in seinem Dunkel alle Macht ber Finfterniß überwinden läßt, gibt. Ach! ich, die ich ganz von ber Ueberzeugung eine von ben Schwachen ber Erbe zu fein, burchbrungen bin, und feinen Tropfen nordischen Beldenbluts besitze, ich freue mich, daß man auf eine Weise, welcher Seelenadel und Schönheit eigen ift, ohne daß sie Berserkermuth heischt und beren sich selbst bie stärksten Geister nicht zu schämen brauchen, leben und sterben kann. Erinnerst Du Dich, Harald, bes "alten Dichters" von Rein? Dies Gebicht bruckt vollkommen bie Stimmung aus, welche ich mir in meinen letten Stunden jo gern aneignen möchte.

Harald erinnerte sich nur dunkel des "alten Dichters," und sowohl er als die Obristin baten Alette sie näher damit bekannt zu machen. Alette konnte sich nicht auf das ganze Gedicht besinnen, setzte aber das Wesentlichste

beffelben in folgeuben Worten auseinander:

Es ist Frühling. Der alte Skalde wandert durch Haine und Auen, in den Gegenden, wo er früher gesfungen hatte, wo er früherhin froh unter den von ihm Erfreuten gewesen war. Jest aber ist seine Stimme gebrochen, seine Kraft, sein Feuer versiegt. Wie ein

Schatten bessen, was er einst war, wandelt er in der jungen, lebensfrischen Welt umher. Lenzvögel schaaren sich um ihn her, heißen ihn freudig willkommen und bitten ihn, in die Harse zu greisen, und das neuerstandene Jahr, den lachenden Lenz zu besingen. Er antwortet:

"Ihr kleinen, Ihr lieblichen Sänger, Die Harfe schlag ich nicht länger, Kein Lenz mir die Jugend mehr bringt — Lallt der alte Dichter und singt: — Doch glüb' ich vor Lust, Himmlische Ruh' in der Brust."

Und weiter wandert er durch Haine und Auen. Der zwischen grünen Usern murmelnde Bach flüstert ihm seine Wonne über die gesprengten Bande zu, und begrüßt den Sänger als Boten des Lenzes und der Freiheit:

"Der Harfe mein Riefeln behagt, Sie spielet und jubelt und flagt; D loß sie doch wieder erschallen! Gleich mir, die Tage entwallen."

Der greise Sänger antwortet:

D sprudelnde Quelle, so klar, Ich bin nicht mehr, was ich einst war; Den Namen allein ich noch trage, Als Echo verflossener Tage. Doch glüh' ich vor Lust, Himmlische Ruh' in der Brust."

Und er wandert weiter; ihn umschweben tanzende Drhaben, die Blumen bieten ihm Kränze dar und bitten ihn, ihr Fest zu besingen; die Zephhre, welche in den Saiten der Harse zu tändeln pslegten, suchen in den Gebüschen, ob er sie dort versteckt habe, liebkosen den Breis, und suchen auf's Neue, wiewohl vergebens; da wollen sie fliehen, er aber bittet:

"Geliebte! Ihr sollt mich nicht fliehn, Den Weg sollt, Ihr Blumen! umblühn! Es brach mir die Harf', doch nicht Rlage Soll die lichten Geister des Lenzes verjagen. Ich glub' ja vor Lust, Himmtische Ruh' in der Brust."

Er wandert weiter und sucht jeden geliebten Winkel auf. Die Jugend des Landes versammelt sich und umgibt den greisen Sänger, den Freund der Jugend und Freude. Sie ersuchen ihn, mit seinen Tönen ihr Fest zu verschönern.

Denn Lenz mit Lenzlust ift falt, Wenn Sang und harfe nicht schallt.

Der Alte antwortet:

D Jugend! verraucht ist mein Feuer. so wild! Meine Dämm'rung ist fühl, aber mild, Der Jugend liebes Gedenken Nur Eure Lieder mir schenken. Beklaget mich nicht; denn ich glübe vor Luft, himmlische Ruh' in der Brust."

Und jest fordert er die Waldesfänger, die Blumen, die Jugend, alle lieblichen Gegenstände der Natur und des Lebens auf, sich des Lebens zu freuen und dessen Schöpfer zu preisen. Aller Wesen Schönheit und Lust sind seinem Silberhaare Kränze, und dankbar und glückslich, bewundernd und lobsingend, sinkt er still in die Mutterarme der Natur."

Allette schwieg, eine milbe Rührung bebte bei ben letten Worten in ihrer Stimme und glänzte in ihrem lieblichen Antlite. Frau Astrid's Zähren flossen, ihre Hände krampsten sich hettig zusammen, indem sie sagte: "D! so zu sühlen eh man stirbt — und so sterben zu können!" — Sie zog Alette mit einer gewissen Hefetigkeit an sich, küßte sie, und weinte dann leise, an ihre Schulter gelehnt. Auch Harald war aufgeregt, schien aber seine Gesühle zu bewältigen, und schaute mit ernsten, thränenschweren Augen auf die Gruppe vor sich. Leise und unbemerkt schlich Susanna aus dem Zimmer. Sie sühlte einen Stachel im Herzen, eine Schlange wühlte in ihrem Busen; von einer namenlosen, peinslichen Unruhe getrieben, eilte sie hinaus in's Freie,

und ging, fast ohne es zu wissen, mit heftigen Schritzten, den steilen Fußpfad eines Berges, von dem sie oft in ruhigeren Stunden die schöne Aussicht bewun-

bert hatte, hinauf.

Große und schöne Bilber hatten sich, während des vorhergehenden Gespräches, vor ihren Blicken entrollt, neben ihnen fühlte sie sich so klein, so arm. Ach! sie konnte nicht einmal von dem Großen und Schönen sprechen, denn ihre Zunge war gebunden. Sie fühlte so warm, und konnte doch Niemanden erwärmen. Die glückliche Alette gewann ohne Mühe, ohne es vielleicht zu würdigen, eine Liebe, einen Beifall, wie ihn Sussanna gerne mit ihrem Leben erkauft hätte. Der Barsb'rasinn kochte in ihr auf, und mit grollendem Blick gen Himmel sagte sie: soll ich denn in meinem ganzen Leben steiß eine geringe, verachtete Dienerin bleis ben?!"

Der Himmel blickte mild, aber melancholisch, auf das junge Mädchen hernieder; sanfte Regentropfen träuselzten auf ihre Stirne, die ganze Natur rings um sie her war still und gleichsam trauernd. Diese trübe Ruhe wirkte auf Susanna wie der mildtadelnde Blick einer Mutter. Sie blickte in ihr Herz und sah Neid und Hochmuth in demselben, und bebte vor sich selbst zurück. Sie schaute auf den Fluß, der in der Tiese zu ihren Füßen brauste und dachte sehnsuchtsvoll:

"D wer boch tief, tief in seine Wogen tauchen und gereinigt — gebessert wieder baraus emporsteigen könnte!"

Aber schon dieser Wunsch hatte wie eine läuternde Taufe auf Susanna's Seele gewirkt, und sie fühlte frische und lichte Gedanken in sich auftauchen. — "Eine geringe Dienerin!" begann Susanna jest — und warzum sollte das eine verächtliche Bestimmung sein? Der Höchste hat ja auf Erden gedient, er hat ja für Alle, für die Geringsten, er hat ja auch für mich gedient! o, — und es ward immer heller und wärmer in ih-

rem Bergen - ich will eine gute Dienerin sein, will barin meine Chre suchen und feine andere begehren! Gefallen fann ich nicht, Schönheit, Beift und anbre bobe Gaben besite ich nicht - aber lieben und bienen kann ich, und bas will ich thun, thun mit ganzem Bergen, aus allen Kräften und in aller Demuth, und wenn mich auch die Menschen verachten, so wird Gott Die geringe, aber treue Magd nicht verlaffen!

Alls Susanna ihren bethränten Blid wieber zur Erbe fentte, fiel er auf ein kleines Moosgewächs, eines ber geringgeachteten Kinder der Natur, welche im Stillen und unbemerkt die Metamorphosen ihres Lebens burch= geben. Das Pflänzchen ftand im frischen Grun, und an seinen Spiten hingen flare Regentropfen, in benen ber, jest hinter bem Gewölf hervortretenbe, Mond *)

ichimmerte.

Susanna betrachtete die Moospflanze, und diese schien ihr zuzuflüstern: Siehst Du, obgleich ich so gering icheine, habe ich boch ben Thau und bas Licht bes himmels in berfelben Fulle, als bie Rofen und Springen bes Gartens. — Susanna verstand bie Sprache bes fleinen Gewächses, bankbar und ruhig wiederholte fie mit einer Art ftiller Freude bei fich felbft bie Worte: eine bemuthige, eine treue Magb! -

Als Sujanna nach Saufe fam, fant fie bie Obriftin nicht wohl; fie war febr aufgeregt und bann ftanb immer ein Krampf zu befürchten. - Susanna bat recht herzlich und erhielt bie Erlaubniß, biefe Racht, wenigstens bis fie eingeschlafen ware, bei ihr zu machen. Die Obriftin hatte eine andere treue Dienerin, aber diese war alt und fehr taub, und Sufanna hatte burchaus

fein Vertrauen zu ihr.

Die Obriftin ging zu Bette. Sufanna fette fich, ftill

^{*) 3}m ichwedischen Tert fieht Solen (die Conne), Dies icheint aber ein Brrthum ber Berfafferin ju fein, da biefe Scene am Abende fpielt. (Bgl. weiter oben.) Anmert. d. Ueberf.

mit ihren Gedanken und ihrem Strickstrumpf beschäftigt, auf einen am Fenster stehenden Schemel. Das Fenster war den Tag hindurch geöffnet gewesen und viele Mücken waren in's Zimmer geslogen; die Obristin ward von ihnen beunruhigt, und beklagte sich darüber, daß sie sie am Schlasen hinderten. Still entblößte Susanna ihre weißen Schultern, Arme und Hals, und als die Mücken haufenweise auf sie herabslogen und ihre Herzin ruhig schlasen ließen, saß Susanna still, ließ die Mücken schwelgen, und schwelgte dabei selbst mehr als man glauben kann.

14.

Entfernung und Annäherung.

Wahre Delikatesse, dieses schönste Herzblatt der Humanität zeigt sich ja am deutlichsten in Kleinigkeiten; was wir aber so nennen, ist keinesweges immer so klein.

3. C. Lous.

Es geht mit unseren Fehlern, wie mit dem Meerrettig; beide sind außerordentlich schwer aus dem Boden, in dem sie einmal festgewachsen sind, auszurotten,
und nichts Niederschlagenderes gibt es für den Bebauer, der das Unkraut gern aus seinem Acker fortgeschasst haben möchte, als das vor Kurzem Ausgejätete, aus übriggebliebenen, in der Erde verborgenen
Wurzeln, wieder frisch an's Licht hervorschießen zu sehen. Man kann alsdann über den unkrautbewachsenen
Boden ordentlich böse werden, und — wenn das eigene, liebe Selbst dieser Boden ist — die herzlichste
Lust empsinden, weit weit von sich selbst wegzureisen.
Aber das geht nicht so!

Sujanna hatte oft biese Empfindung, mahrend fie täglich bemüht mar bie Gemüthsbewegungen, welche inzwischen in ihr aufstiegen, zu bemeistern. Doch hat-ten die Gebanken und Vorsätze, welche an bem im vo= rigen Rapitel geschilderten Abend in ihr geweckt mur= ben, sie gar zu tief erfaßt, als baß sie wieber weichen follten, und mit bem Wahlipruch: "eine bemuthige, eine treue Magb" fampfte fie fich tapfer burch bie Befahren und Schlingen bes Tages hindurch. Ihr Wesen warb ruhiger, fie bestrebte fich, indem sie ftill ber Theilnahme an Gefprachen, welche ihre Bilbung überftiegen, ent= jagte, und freundlich die Aufmerksamkeit und Theilnahme Anderer von sich abzuwenden suchte, einzig und allein, Allen in materieller Beziehung Gemächlichkeit und Behaglichkeit zu bereiten, und jeben Wunsch zu erfüllen, ja wo möglich bemfelben zuvorzukommen. Gin folches Wirken hat einen größern Ginfluß auf bas Gluck bes Alltagelebens, als man glaubt; ber gute Wille verleiht felbst leblosen Dingen Beift und Leben. Fur ben Dienenden felbst aber wird bies Leben voll Muhseligkeiten und Sorgfalt für Andre schwer, wenn fein Sonnen= blick ber Liebe, feine herzliche Anerkennung auf ihren arbeitsvollen Tag fällt.

Im Anfang des Augustmonats verreiste Harald, und wollte nach vierzehn Tagen mit Alf Lerow, Alettens Verlobten, zurückfehren; während seiner Abwesenheit sollte Alette einen Besuch bei ihrem Oheim mütterlicher Seite in Hallingsthal abstatten, um aber Frau Astrid's Wünschen nachzukommen, blieb sie noch eine Woche auf Semb. In dieser Zeit schlossen sich Susanna und Alette näher aneinander, denn Alette ward unwillkührlich von Susannen's unermüdlicher und anspruchloser Fürsorge gerührt, und fand außerdem einen so ossenen Sinn, ein so herzliches Theilnehmen bei ihr, daß sie sich selbst das Vergnügen nicht versagen konnte ibr Eines und das Andere von dem Manchen, welches

im Berzen einer glücklichen Braut lebt, mitzuthei= len. Glücklich — ja, das war Alette, denn sie liebte Alt Lexow warm, und schon seit geraumer Zeit, und sollte binnen Kurzem auf ewig mit ihm vereint werden, und gleichwohl beschlich oft, wenn von der Hochzeit, und ihrem Niederlaffen im Morden die Rebe war, ein wehmuthiger Bug ihr liebliches Gesicht. Su= fanna befragte sie mehre Male um die Ursache, und jedes Mal lehnte Alette die Frage scherzend ab; eines Abends aber, als sie vertraulicher benn je mit einander plauderten, sagte Alette: Es ift ein wunderliches Gefühl, sich zu seiner Hochzeit vorzubereiten, wenn man babei ben Glauben hat, dieselbe nicht lange zu überleben! Diese Versetzung nach dem Norden ist mein Tod, deffen bin ich gewiß. Nun sieh nur nicht so erschrocken aus, es ist ja auf alle Fälle nicht so gefährlich, überdies habe ich ben Gedanken an einen frühen Tod schon lange mit mir herumgetragen, so baß ich baran gewöhnt fein muß:

Ach — sagte Susanna — die Glücklichen, welche lieben und geliebt werden, sollten nimmer sterben! aber woher diese wundersame Ahnung?

Ich weiß es selbst nicht — antwortete Alette aber sie begleitet mich schon von meiner frühesten Ju= gend an. Meine Mutter war unter bem schönen Sim= mel der Provence geboren und brachte den größten Theil ihrer Jugend in dem warmen Lande zu. Die Liebe zu meinem Bater ließ sie in unserm Norwegen ein zweites Vaterland lieben; hier verbrachte sie ihr übriges Leben, konnte aber bas kalte Klima nicht er= tragen, sehnte sich im Stillen nach dem warmen Lande zurück und starb in diesem Heimweh. Sie hat diese Gefühle auf mich vererbt, und obgleich ich jene Orangenwälder, den warmen Azurhimmel, von denen sie so gern sprach, nie sah, so habe ich doch seit meiner Kindheit Tagen die Liebe zu ihnen eingesogen; überdies

habe ich von meiner Mutter die Empfindlichkeit gegen Kälte überkommen; meine Brust ist nicht kräftig und — die langen düstren Winter des Nordlandes, das Wohnen am Meeresstrande in einem Klima das zweismal so rauh ist als das, an welches ich gewohnt bin, der Seenebel und die Stürme — ach, ich werde es nicht lange aushalten! Aber Susanna, Du mußt mir heilig versprechen, weder zu Harald noch zu Lerow ein einziges Wort, von dem, was ich Dir jest anvertraut habe, zu reden.

Aber — sagte Susanna — wenn sie nun darum wüßten, so würdest Du gewiß ber Reise bahin entge= hen; gewiß würde Dein Bräutigam Deinetwegen ein

milberes Land auffuchen ——

Und dort hinwelfen, und vor Heimweh nach jenem geliebten Nordlande sterben! Mein, nein, Susanna! Ich kenne seine Liebe zu seinem Heimathlande und weiß, daß diese winterliche Natur, welche ich fürchte, ihm gerade Leben und Gesundheit gibt. Alf ist mit Leib und Seele ein Nordländer und mit der Gegend, wo seine Bäter wohnten, der Gegend, deren Aufblühen und Gedeihen sein Lieblingsplan, der Hauptzweck seines Wirkens ist, gleichsam zusammengewachsen. Nein, nein! meinetwegen soll er seine Heimath, sein edles Streben nicht aufgeben. Lieber will ich, wenn es denn so sein muß, in seinem Nordlande ein frühes Grab sinden! Susanna wünschte setzt Mehres über das Land, das Alette sich so schrecklich dachte, zu wissen, und diese willsahrte ihr, und wir wersen zugleich mit den jungen Freundinen einen — —

15.

Blick auf das Nordland.

Ralt und hart ift Alles. Blom.

Doch weilet Gottes Geift über den Nordlanden.

Ein großer Theil Norwegens hat sein Untlit gleich= fam vom Leben abgewendet. Die alte Nacht, welche die Vorwelt sich als Urmutter aller Dinge bachte, hält bier bas Riefenkind in ihren dunklen Urmen, und hullt es hart in enge Windeln, aus benen es fich nicht mit Luft und Freiheit zu entwickeln vermag. Das Nordland mit Finnmarken fieht Monate lang im Jahre Die Sonne nicht, die Schwierigkeit und Gefährlichkeit der Wege versperrt den Umgang mit der füdlicheren Welt. Der Beift bes Nordpols ruht brudend auf biefer Gegend, und wenn er von dort aus über das südlichere Nor= wegen in stillen Augustnächten weht, so verwelken bie halbreifen Saaten in den Thälern und auf den Cbenen, und bas eisiggraue Antlit des Sungers fliert vom Nordergebirge her auf fleißige, aber unglückliche Menschenschaaren. Das Meer bricht sich an Diesen Ruffen gegen einen Kreis von Scharen und Rlippen, um welche freischend und frachzend bie Bolarvögel schwärmen. Sturme wechseln mit bicken Nebeln ab. Die biefen Strand entlang laufenden Klippen haben gar absonderliche Gestalten, bald erheben fie fich wie Thurme, bald gleichen fie Thieren, bald zeigen fie gi= gantische und graufige Menschenprofile, und man begreift fehr wohl, wie ber Volksglaube in ihnen verfteinerte Ungethume und Riefen fieht, und bag unfere Vorfahren ihr Jotunheim in Diese wilde Wüstenei verleaten.

Gin dufteres Uberbleibsel bes Beidenthums will auch noch beut zu Tage biese Gegend nicht verlaffen; es ift in ber Ginbildungsfraft ber Menschen festgefroren, es bat fich in ben unheimlichen Naturgestalten, Die ihm einst Leben verliehen, versteinert. Umfonft versucht bas Licht bes Evangeliums Die tausenbjährigen Schatten zu verscheuchen, die alte Nacht hält sie zurück. Umsonst erhebt nich überall auf ben Rlippen bas heilige Kreuz. ber Glaube an Zauberwesen und Zauberkunfte lebt boch noch allgemein unter bem Bolke fort. Die Bexe fitt tudisch in ihrer Sohle und weht ben Sturm gegen Die Seefahrer herauf, fo daß biefe verunglücken muffen; bas Gespenst Stallo, ein großer, schwarzgekleibeter Mann, manbert, ben Stab in ber Sant, in Der Wild= niß umber, und forbert ben einsamen Wandrer, bem er begegnet, zum Kampf auf Leben und Tob.

Der Lappe, ber frei mit feiner Rennthierheerde über ungetheilten Boben dahinftreifende Romade bes Dor= bens, sticht wie ein romantischer Zug in Diesem Leben, ben man aber aus ber Ferne betrachten muß, benn in der Rähe erlischt alle Schönheit in Branntweinsbunften

und im Rauche der Lappenhütte, — hervor. Die Küsten entlang, zwischen den Klippen, Schären und auf ben hunderten von Infeln, welche biefen Strand umgeben, lebt ein Fischervolf, bas mit ben Seemoven um bie Wette bas Meer burchfurcht. Nacht und Tag. Sommer und Winter wimmelt es auf ben Wogen von ihren Böten, burch ben heulenben Sturm, burch bie schäumende Brandung eilen sie unerschrocken mit ihren leichten Segelboten, um aus ben Meerestiefen bie Gil= berichaar*), ben größten Reichthum bes Landes aufzu= fangen. Biele werden in jedem Jahr von der Tiefe verschlungen, aber die Menge fampft gegen die Gle= mente und stegt. So wird unter bem täglichen Kampfe manche Rraft entwickelt, manche helbenmuthige That

^{*)} Häringe und Anichovee. Streit u. Frieden. 1.

vollführt, und das Volk härtet sich gegen Gefahr und Tob — aber auch gegen jede milbere Schönheit bes Lebens ab.

Gleichwohl ist in dieser rauhen Natur die Eidergans zu Hause, zwischen diesen nackten Klippen baut sie ihr Nest von den aus ihrer eigenen Brust gerupften Dausnen, den seidenweichen Daunen, welche später durch die Welt gehen, um die Menschen im Nord, wie im Süden warm und weich zu betten. Wie manches leidende Glied, wie manches ermüdete Haupt hat seine Lindes

rung nicht von Norwegens Klippen erhalten!

Auf der Grenze zwischen dem Nordlande und Finnmarken liegt die Stadt Tromsö, der jetzt aufblühende
Centralpunkt dieser Provinzen. Hier sollte Alette ihr Leben zubringen, hier bereitete ihr die Liebe eine warme, friedliche Wohnung, gleich dem Eidervogek, aus der eignen Brust die Mittel zwischen den rauhen Klippen ein weiches Lager zu bereiten, holend. Da Alette Susannen das, sie vor dem Übersiedeln nach dem Nordlande, Abschreckende geschildert hatte, verbarg sie dieser auch das, was sie so lieb und mächtig damit aussöhnte, nicht; und Susanna sah dies sehr wohl ein, als Alette ihr folgenden Brief vorlas:

Tromsö am 28 Mai.

"Wärest Du doch hier, meine Alette! Ich ent"behre Dich in jedem Augenblicke, während ich
"meine Wohnung zum Empfang Deiner einrichte,
"und fühle unaushörlich das Bedürsniß zu fra"gen: Wie willst Du, was sagst Du dazu? Ach!
"wärest Du doch hier, meine innigst Geliebte,
"jetzt, zu dieser Stunde, und Du solltest über
"das "Eis= und Bärenland" vor dem Dir, wie
"ich weiß, heimlich graut, erstaunen. Die Ge"gend hier umher ist nicht wild und düster, wie
"z. B. auf Helgoland; Waldungen umfränzen
"das klippenreiche User unserer Insel, und die

"Wogen bes Meeres umspielen fie im Meerbusen "und ficheren Buchten. Unfere bubich gebaute "fleine Stadt liegt reizend, auf ber Gubfeite ber "Insel, und ist bloß burch eine schmale Meer= "enge vom feften Sanbe getrennt. Dein Saus "liegt in ber Hafenstraße, welche längs bes gro= "Ben, bequemen Safens binlauft. In Diefem "Augenblick liegen bort über zwanzig Fahrzeuge "vor Anker, und mehrerer Nationen verschie= "bene Flaggen weben im Abendwinde. Es find "Englander, Deutsche und besonders Ruffen, Die "hieher zu unseren Kuften kommen, um unsere Wische, unsere Eiderdaunen u. f. w. zu holen .. und bagegen ihr Korn und Belzwerk auszutau= "ichen. Die Sublander führen überdies eine "Menge Schmuckfachen und kleine Luxusartifel "ein, welche vie Bewohner von Rola und der "Gegenden am weißen Meere begierig einhandeln. "Es lebe ber Handel! Was hat nicht Alles ber "Sandel vom Beginn der Welt an für Die Be= "quemlichkeit bes Lebens, für bie Annäherung "ber Länder und Menschen, für bie Milberung "ber Sitten gewirft! Es hat mich immer in "tieffter Seele gefreut, baf ber weifeste und mil= "befte Gesetgeber bes Alterthums: Solon, ein "Sanbelsmann war. "Durch ben Handel "fagt einer seiner Biographen — burch Weisheit .. und Mufik ward fein Geift ausgebildet."" Es "lebe ber Sanbel! benn was lebt nicht burch ihn? "Was ist alles rege Leben, jebe Bewegung im "Grunde Anderes, als Sandel, Taufch, Geben "gegen Geben? In ber Liebe, in ber Freund= "ichaft, im großen Bolksleben, im fleinen Fami= "lientreise, überall, wo ich Glück und Wohlstand "erblicke, sehe ich auch Handel; ja, was ist die "ganze Erbe Anderes, als eine Kolonie bes Mut= "terlandes: " Himmel, deren Wohl und gu-"tes Gedeihen nich auf freien Import und Er= "port grundet? Man konnte biefes Gleichniß "noch weiter ausführen, doch - Du gütiger "Geber dort oben, verzeihe, bag es überhaupt

gewagt wurde." "Du mußt aber nicht glauben, Alette, bag bas "materielle Sandelsintereffe hier bas Intereffe für edlere und feinere Lebensbildung ausschließt. "Unter den taufend Menschen, welche die Bevöl= "terung ber Stadt ausmachen, fann man fich ei= "nen intereffanten Kreis zum Ungange wählen. "Wir haben sogar ein Theater und viele Ber= "gnügungen des gebildeten Lebens. Ich war ge= "ftern auf einem Balle, wo man die ganze Nacht "durch bis an den hellen lichten Tag tanzte. Die Mone Musik, die geschmackvolle Toilette und "der anmuthige Tanz der Damen, vor Allem naber der Ton im Umgang, die herzliche Mun= sterkeit erregten die Verwunderung mehrerer an= "wesenden Fremden, und veranlagte fie zu ber "Frage, ob sie sich benn wirklich unter bem sie= "benzigsten Breitengrabe befänden ?"

"Aber ber Winter — so höre ich im Geiste "Dich ausrufen — im Sommer mag es noch "angehn, aber ber lange, finftere Winter?! Mun "wohl, meine Allette! der Winter macht sich schon "ganz gut, wenn man sich einander liebt, wenn "man im Sause warm fitt. Erinnerft Du Dich "noch, Alette, als wir im verwichenen Gerbft in "Christiansand im Morgenblatte solgenden Aus-"zug aus der Tromsver Zeitung vom 14. Octo-

"ber zusammen lasen ?"

""Schon mehrere auf einander folgende Tage ",haben wir Schneegestöber gehabt, und in Die-""jem Augenblick sucht man mit bem Schnees

"pflug einen Weg für bie Kirchgänger zu bah= ""nen. Die Grabesruhe ber Racht und bes ""Winters breitet fich in Sturmschrift über Wiese ... und Thal aus, und nur noch einige Rühe ""wandeln wie Gespenster über bie ichneebedeck= ... ten Fluren um ihr burftiges Mahl von ben ... noch nicht überschneiten Baumzweigen zu THE RESIDENCE PROPERTY. ee esten. 44 44

"Mir gefiel bie kleine Winterlanbschaft, "bei den Worten "Grabesruhe ber Nacht "bes Winters"" bebteft Du unwillführlich "jammen und neigtest Dein holbes, liebes Untlig "mit geschloffenen Augen an meine Bruft. D, meine "Allette, so sollst Du es auch kunftighin machen, wwenn Dich Grauen vor Nacht und Kälte er= "faßt, an meiner Bruft, bem Schlage meines "Berzens, meiner Liebe lauschend, follft Du bie "düfteren Bilber außerhalb bes Sauses vergeffen. "Schließe Deine Augen, schlummere Geliebte, wäh= "rend ich Dich bewache, bann wirst Du mit fla= rem Auge und rothblühender Wange auf Nacht und Winter blicken, und fühlen, bag ihre Macht "nicht so groß sei. D gewiß kann bie Liebe — "bieser Beiser *) ber Seele — Gis und Schnee "überall auf ber Erbe schmelzen, gewiß fann, "wo ihre warmen Quellen springen, selbst oben "am Nordpole ein Guben erblühen."

"Indem ich Dieses schreibe, hore ich eine Musik, welche einen froben und babei doch wehmuthi= gen Eindruck macht. Es find acht Ruffen, welche "eines ihrer Nationallieder fingen, während fie "bei bem ftillen Abend bem Tromfoe=Sund bin= "abfahren. Gie fingen vierstimmig und mit ber "vollfommensten Reinheit und Harmonie. "Gesang ift in einer Molltonart, und gleichwohl

TIL

TIC!

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^{*)} Seife Duellen auf Island. "

.*

16/2

"nicht trauria. Sie rubern im bufteren Schat-.ten bes Stranbes, bei jedem Ruberichlag leuch= "tet bas Waffer um ben Rahn, und es fpruht wie Feuerfunken von den Rudern. Dies ift eine "im westlichen Meere nicht ungewöhnliche Natur= verscheinung, und weißt Du wohl, meine Alette, was benn eigentlich im Meere fo leuchtet und "brennt? Liebe ift es! In gewiffen Augenblicen "nämlich fteigert fich bas Gefühl ber Meerinfeften "zu einem hoben Grabe von Innigkeit und Mil= "liarden Wesen, welche, dem unbewaffneten Men= "Schenauge unsichtbar in ben Wellen leben, feiern "bann eine Gludfeligfeits = , eine Bermablungs= "stunde. In solchen Augenblicken leuchtet bas "Meer, benn bas allerfleinfte Burmchen ftromt, "von Liebe durchglüht, einen Lichtstrahl von fich. "Sein Leben brennt, aber nur eine furze Beit, no boch empor, um bann besto schneller zu er-"lofchen; boch es ftirbt ohne Schmerzen, ftirbt sim Gefühl ber Wonne. Reiche Ratur! Guti= .ger Schöpfer!"

"Auch mein Herz brennt! Ich blicke auf das "leuchtende Element, welches jetzt — man kann "es mit Recht sagen — glückseligkeitsvoll ist, ich "lausche dem Gesange, von Freude und Schmerz "erfüllt, und strecke meine Arme nach Dir aus,

"Allette, meine Alette!" ---

"D! — rief Susanna — wie liebt dich dieser Mann, und wie mußt du ihn wiederlieben! Gewiß, Ihr müßt

lange leben und mit einander glücklich sein!"

"Wenn auch nicht eine lange — fagte Alette — so doch eine kurze Zeit, ja, eine kurze Zeit hoffe ich leben zu können, um ihn glücklich zu machen, um ihm für alle seine Liebe zu danken, und dann —"

Allette beugte fich zur Erde und pflückte eine schöne, aufgeblühre Wasserlilie, die im Strome, an bessen Ufer

sie stand, wuchs; sie zeigte sie Susannen, indem sie mit sinnendem Lächeln fortfuhr:

"Bas ist es denn mehr? Einmal daher Glüht eine freundliche Spur Bom himmel der heimischen Flur. Einmal glänzt, strahlenumzogen, Sie unter tönenden Tempelvogen; Solch furzer Lauf Bieget den Schlummer des Todes wohl auf." *)

16.

Die Wiederkehr.

Bu kommen und zu geben, Wilkfommen und Lebewohl: Das ift des Lebens Loos. Bjerregaard.

Alette reiste, um bas dem Onkel im Gallingthal geseehene Versprechen zu halten, aber nach einem Paar Wochen war sie wieder in Gesellschaft Haralds und Lerow's, welche sie abgeholt hatten, auf Semb. Doch wollte sie daselbst jest nur kurze Zeit verweilen, um alsdann mit ihrem Verlobten und der Familie des Oheims die Reise nach Drontheim, wo ihre Hochzeit bei einer reichen und herzensguten Tante, welche sich sich lange darauf gesreut und bereits seit einem Monate ihre Anrichtbänke mit Mehl bestreut, und Alles hergerichtet hatte, geseiert werden sollte. Auch Harald sollte bei diesem Zuge sein.

Alf Lerow war ein Mann in seinen besten Jahren, offen und freimüthig. Sein Gesicht war klein, blatter= narbig, sonst aber schön, voll Lebens und Wohlwol=

^{*)} Munch.

lens. Er war einer von den Menschen, zu denen man beim ersten Anblick Zuneigung und Vertrauen fassen muß. Susanna freute sich sehr das liebevolle, innige Verhältniß, welches zwischen den zwei Verlobten herrschte, zu sehen. Sie selbst war jetzt gleichfalls glücklicher, denn Harald überließ Alette meist ihrem Bräutigam und suchte, wie vordem, ihre Gesellschaft oft auf.
Allette war witzig, hübsch und sehr gebildet, aber sie sprach gerne selbst. Harald that im Grunde das Nämzliche und eine hessere Lubörerin als Sulanna aah es

liche, und eine bessere Zuhörerin als Susanna gab es gar nicht. Die Zwistigkeiten kamen jetzt nicht mehr auf, aber es war ein gewisses Etwas in Susanna, das Harald, weit mehr als früher die Lust an Strei-ten es gethan hatte, zu ihr zog. Er fand Susanna's ganzes Wesen zu ihrem Bortheil verändert; es lag etwas Ruhiges und zugleich etwas Sansteres als frü-her darin. Sie war überdem jetzt immer so freund= lich, so ausmerksam, und auf Alles, was den Anderen eine Freude machen konnte, bedacht. Er sah auch mit welcher stillen Unruhe ihre Gedanken der Frau Astrid folgten, welche jest beim Herannahen des Herbstes — man war in den letzten Tagen des August — wieder in die finstere und wortkarge Laune, aus welcher sie eine Zeit lang erwacht war, zu verfallen schien. Sie

verließ jett selten, nur zur Essenszeit, ihre Gemächer. Ste verließ jett selten, nur zur Essenszeit, ihre Gemächer. Harald wünschte, daß seine Schwester und sein Schwa-ger, vor ihrer Abreise, eines der dort gebräuchlichen Spiel- und Tanzseste mit ansehen möchten, und hatte zu diesem Behuse ein ländliches Fest, zu welchem er sie und auch Susanna einlud, und wohin auch wir und begeben wollen, veranstaltet.

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Der Halling.

Diese eigenthümliche, wilde, rührende Musit ist unsere Nationalpoesie.

h. Wergeland.

Die Geige klingt,
Froher nicht singt
Bögelchen in Wald und Wiesen.
Surrah! Schenkt ein bis an Bechers Nand.
Hoch die Chrenmaid, die den Tanz erfand!
Soch die Dirne mein! und
Hoch die Dirne dein! und
Hoch Bater und Mutter auf der Bank:
Norwegisches Lied.

An einem schönen Nachmittage in den ersten Tagen des Septembers, sah man zwei junge festlich gekleidete Bauernmädchen auf Fußwegen durch die Waldung im Heimthal fröhlich miteinander schwaßend einem grüsnen, offenen, von Bäumen umgebenen Plaze, wo eine Menge Personen beiderlei Geschlechts, sämmtlich in Bauserntracht, versammelt war, zueilen. Hier war der Tanzplaz, und indem sich die jungen Mädchen demsselben näherten, sagte die Eine: "So viel ist gewiß, Susanna! der Anzug steht Dir vortresslich, Dein schösnes, lichtes, mit den hineingeslochtenen rothen Bändern verziertes Haar glänzt schöner als je. Meine Tracht, scheint mir, sitt mir nicht halb so gut."

"Weil Du, liebste Alette barin aussiehst wie eine verkleibete Prinzessin, und ich in der meinige wie ein

wirkliches Bauermädchen."

"Du bist eine Schmeichlerin, Susanna, wie ich bemerke. Wir wollen boch einmal sehen, ob Alf und Haralb die tellamarkischen Bauerdirnen gleich wiederzerkennen werden."

Nicht lange blieben sie hierüber in Ungewisheit, benn kaum waren sie auf dem Tanzplatze angekommen, so tanzten ihnen auch gleich zwei Bauern in hallingischen Jacken, mit breiten Gürteln um den Leib, entgegen, und sangen im Chor mit den Anderen folgendes ländliche Bolkslied:

Aa äg e Unkar, aa äg e ärlig Aa äg e Sonen hans Gulleig Bö; Aa vil du väre mäg tro og kjärlig, Saa ska du värta mi aegta-mö.*)

Susanna erkannte Harald in dem jungen Bauer, der, als er so sang, heiter und freundlich sie bei der Hand nahm, und sie zu einem muntern Hopser, der zum Gesang getanzt wurde, führte. Alette tanzte mit ihrem Alf, der sich als Hallingsbursche ganz prächtig ausnahm.

Susanna hatte nie so hübsch und so glücklich ausgesehen; sie war aber auch noch nie bei einem solchen Bergnügen zugegen gewesen. Der schöne Abend, die Töne der Musik, das Lebendige des Tanzes Harald's, ein gewisses inniges Wohlwollen ausdrückende Blicke, die frohen, glücklichen Gesichter, welche sie rund um sich her sah — noch nie war ihr das Leben so stillheiter erschienen, und Allen schien es so vorzukommen, und Alle schwenkten sich nach Herzenslust herum; die silsbernen Spangenschnallen erklangen und Schilling auf Schilling tanzte hinab in die kleine, buntgemalte Harzbangervioline, welche ein ausdruckvoll, ja fast energisch aussehender Greis, mit feuriger Lebendigkeit, spielte.

Nach dem ersten Tanze hielt man einen Augenblick Rast. Man aß Apfel und trank Hardangerbier aus Silberkannen. Darauf erhob sich ein fast allgemeiner Ruf, welcher Haralb und einen anderen, gleich ihm

^{*)} Ich bin ein Jungmann und ich bin ehrlich, und ich bin der Sohn von Gulleig Bo; und willst du mir treu und hold sein, so sollst du meine Braut werden.

wegen seiner Gewandtheit und Stärke bekannten jun= gen Mann aufforderte, einen "losen Halling" zu tan= zen. Sie ließen sich nicht lange bitten, und traten mitten in den Kreis, der sich plötlich erweiterte und

um fie schloß.

Der Mustant stimmte, und begann darauf, das Haupt tief auf die Brust gesenkt, mit einem Ausdruck, einem Feuer, welches man begeistert nennen konnte, zu spielen. Es war eine der genialsten Kompositionen des wilden Maliserkund; war sie beim Heer im Bisvouak unter dem freien, nächtlichen Himmel oder in Ketten unter Missethätern geschrieben? Niemand weiß das, aber in beiden Berhältnissen hat er Töne hervorgezaubert, welche eben so wenig, als sein bewegtes Leben, aus dem Gedächtnisse des Bolkes schwinden sollten. Jest schien die Hardangervioline erst den rechten Klang erhalten zu haben. Allgemeiner Beifall erhob sich beim Tanze der jungen Männer, das höchste Interesse aber erregte Harald, welcher bei der Entwickelung des Tanzes wirklich Bewunderung erweckte.

Es giebt vielleicht keinen Tanz, der deutlicher ben Bolkscharacter, aus dem er entsprungen ist, ausspricht, der besser das Leben und die Eigenthümlichkeit des

Morblanders abspiegelt, als eben ber Salling.

Er beginnt gleichsam niedrig an der Erde, unter Hundetrabähnlichen Sprüngen und Biegungen der Arme und Beine, in denen eine große Kraft wie nach-lässig spielt. Es liegt etwas Bärenartiges, Träges, Plumpes, Halbträumerisches darin. Aber es erwacht, es wird Ernst. Da erheben sich die Tanzenden und mit ihnen der Tanz, und entwickeln sich zu Kraftäusferungen, wobei Stärfe und Gelenfigkeit sich daran zu ergößen scheinen, mit Trägheit und Unbeholsenheit zu spielen, und dieselben zu besiegen. Derselbe, der so eben noch an die Erde gebunden schien, springt empor, und tummelt sich, als habe er Schwingen, in der Luft ums

her. Dann nimmt er nach mehren halsbrechenden Bewegungen und Evolutionen, bei denen dem, daran ungewohnten, Zuschauer schaudert, plötzlich wieder seinen ersten ruhigen, sorglosen, etwas schweren Charafter an, und schließt, wie er begann, zur Erde hinab gesenkt.

Lauter Beifallsruf erschallte am Schlusse des Tanzes von allen Seiten; besonders galt er Harald. Jest setten sich Alle in Bewegung zu einer großen Hallingspolska, und jeder Bursch wählte sich eine Dirne. Harald hatte sich kaum durch einen Becher Bier gelabt und gestärkt, als er auch schon wieder zu Susanna eilte, und ihr den Arm zur Hallingpolska bot. Sie hatte diesen Tanz mehre Male in ihrer Heimath getanzt, und nahm Harald's Ausstorderung mit Freuden an.

Auch dieser Tanz ist äußerst charakteristisch; er malt die höchste Lebenslust des Mordländers, er ist die Bersserkerwonne im Tanze. Auf die Arme des Weibes gestützt, schwingt sich der Mann hoch in die Lust, dann fast er sie in die Arme, dreht sich in wilden Wirbelkreissen mit ihr umher, dann trennen sie, dann nähern sie sich einander, und kreisen wieder wie im Übermasse des Lebens und der Lust. Der Takt ist bestimmt, kühn und lebendig. Es ist ein Tanzrausch, in dem sich der Wensch für Augenblicke von jedem Kummer, jeder Les

benslaft, jebem Drude befreit.

Dieses Gefühl hegten jett auch Harald und Susanna, jung, stark, gewandt drehten sie sich mit einer Sicher-heit und Leichtigkeit, welche ihnen den Tanz zu einem Spiele ohne alle Anstrengung zu machen schien, und die Augen sest auf einander gerichtet, hatten sie nicht das leiseste Gefühl von Schwindel. Sie schwenkten sich bei der wunderbaren, bezaubernden Musik wie in einem Zauberkreise umher. Die unteren Saiten tönten stark und seltsam. Die eigenthümliche Bezauberungsstraft, welche in der klaren Wassertiese, in dem mystisschen Innern des Berges, in den dunklen Waldgrotten,

in ben von ben Dichtern besungnen namen bes Meer= weibes, bes Bergkönigs und ber Waldfrau liegt, und bas Berg fo gewaltig zur unbefannten wunderbaren Tiefe zieht — dieser dunkle Natursang erschallte aus den unteren Saiten*) in den zugleich tändelnden und wehmuthigen Tonen bes Sallingtanges. Gie griffen tief in Susanna's Seele, und auch Barald schien biefen Bauber zu empfinden; fie ichwebten, Die wilderen Bewegungen des Tanzes verlassend, immer langsamer, Arm in Arm umher. "D, so durch's Leben!" flüster= ten Harald's Lippen gleichsam unfreiwillig, indem er tief in Sufannens glanzende thranenvolle Augen blickte, und "o so durch's Leben" antwortete es in ihrer Bruft, aber ihre Lippen blieben geschlossen. Sie ward in die= fem Augenblick von einem Beben, welches fie vermochte, mit Tangen aufzuhören, befallen, und fette fich, indem Alles um fie ber im Rreife rundumging. Dicht eber, als bis fie ein Glas Wasser, welches ihr haralb an= bot, getrunken hatte, konnte fie auf feine herzlichen und besorgten Fragen nach ihrem Befinden antworten. Gu= fanna ichob die Schuld auf ben Tang, versicherte ihn aber, daß sie sich schon wieder ganz wohl fühle. In demselben Momente begegneten ihre Augen denen Alet= tens; biese fag etwas entfernt von ihnen, fie betrachtete Baralb und Sufanna mit einem ernften und wie es Sujannen vorkam - unzufriedenen Blide.

Susanna fühlte einen Stich im Herzen, und als Alette zu ihr trat, und sie etwas kalt fragte: wie sie sich befände, antwortete sie gleichfalls kalt und kurz.

Die Sonne neigte sich dem Untergang zu, und ber Abend fing an kuhl zu werben. Die Gesellschaft ward

^{•)} Die unteren Saiten auf der sogenannten Hardangervioline sind unster dem Griffbrette liegende vier Metallsaiten. Sie werden im Afford mit den oberhalb liegenden Darmsaiten gestimmt, wodurch sie, so wie durch die besondere Bauart der Bioliue einen eigenthumlichen, starten, fast melancholischen Zon bekommen.

Blumen bekränztes Zimmer genöthigt. Auf Harald's Begehr spielte jett ein junges Bauernmädchen auf dem Langleg *) und sang dazu mit heller und lebhafter Stimme, den hallingthalischen Gesang: "das Hirtenlesben," welches den Tag des "Sennermädchens" im einsamen Thale, mit der Biehheerde, welche sie dort sorgslos und fröhlich den Sommer über weidet und hütet, obgleich sie sast von allen Menschen abgeschieden ist, so naiv beschreibt; — ich sage: fast, denn Haror der Ziegenhirt läßt sich von seinen Versteck dem Verge hösren, und bald sitzt er bei ihr auf dem Felsblock.

Aa Guten slär Mundharpun, sin Han spelar veent paa Flöitun fiin Aa E sjung vi sun min. **)

So nähert sich der Abend und "alle meine Thierlein" werden nun mit "Trällern und Juchfen" bei Namen aufgerufen.

Kjem Laikeros, Guldstjerne fün Kjem Dokkerose! kjäla min Kjem Bjölka, quitalin! ***)

Und Kühe und Schafe kommen beim Klang der wohlbekannten Stimme, und versammeln sich fröhlich brüllend und blökend bei der Sennerhütte. Jetzt beginnt das Melken, und das Ziegenmädchen singt:

*) Langleg oder Langoleit ist ein vierseitiges Instrument von ungefähr derselben Gestalt, wie das Psalmodikon. Die Bauernmädchen in den Gebirgsgegenden spielen dies Instrument gern, und oft recht ferstig. In einem sogenannten "Liebeslied" aus dem Westsjorthale heißt es:

Ho som so gjilt kan po Langoleik spelo Svanaug den vena, ska no vära mi

(Sie die so schön auf dem Longoleit spielen kann, Swanaug, die holde sou die Meine jest sein.)

- **) Und der Bursche schlägt seine Mundharfe, er spielt gar lieblich auf der feinen Flöte, und ich singe meine Lieder.
- ***) Komm Laiferos, Goldstern fein, fomm Dofferose, mein Liebling, tomm Bjölka, du Zicklein.

När E fär Mjölk i koppun min, So läg E me aa soover in Tes Daug paa Fjöllu sjin.*)

Nach dem Gesang begann man den Tanz mit erneuertem Eifer. Ein eiserner Haken ward in einen der Sparren inmitten des Daches geschlagen, und der Tänzer, welchem es bei den Schwingungen der Hallingspolska gelang, mit dem Absatz gegen den Haken zu schlagen, hatte für diesen Abend den Preis im Tanzen gewonnen. Susanna setzte sich, die halsbrechenden Sprünge der Wettkämpfenden betrachtend, auf eine Bank. Ein Paar große, zwischen der Bank und einem Fenster hangende, belaubte Zweige verhinderten sie die beiden dort stehenden leise mit einander sprechenden Bersonen zu sehen, sie blieb aber wie verzaubert sitzen, als sie Alettes Stimme hörte:

"Susanna ist allerdings ein braves, gutes Mädchen, und ich mag sie wirklich recht gern leiden, dennoch würde es mich beunruhigen, Harald, wenn du dich ernstlich

an sie attachirtest."

"Und warum bas?" fragte Harald.

"Weil ich glaube, daß sie nicht für Dich als Frau paßt; sie hat einen unbeständigen, heftigen Charafter, und" —

"Aber der kann sich ändern, Alette — ja sie hat sich schon sehr geändert; vor ihrer Heftigkeit ist mir

nicht bange — die wurde ich schon fortschaffen."

"Größere Zauberer, als Du, lieber Bruder, haben sich in diesem Glauben getäuscht. Uebrigens ist sie zu ungebildet, zu unwissend, um als Lebensgefährtin für Dich zu passen; auch würde sie nicht für die Gesellsichaftstreise, in denen Du Dich doch einmal bewegen mußt, eignen. Ich bitte Dich, lieber Harald, übereile Dich nicht! Du hast Dir ja schon lange vorgenommen,

^{*)} Wann ich Milch in meinem Eimer bekommen habe, so lege ich nich und schlafe ein, bis ber Tag auf die Gebirge scheint.

eine Reise in's Ausland zu machen, um Deine Rennt= niffe in ber Landwirthschaft zu erweitern. Führe jest biefen Plan aus, reife und fieh Dich in ber Welt um, ebe Du Dich für Die Lebenszeit binbeft."

"Ich glaube Du hast Recht, Allette! und ich will Deinen Rath befolgen, aber —"

"Ueberdies - unterbrach ihn Alette in ihrem Eifer - hat es ja mit Deinem Beirathen noch immer Zeit; Du bift noch jung, hast Zeit, Dich umzusehen und zu wählen; Du könntest, wenn Du wolltest, leicht eine in jeder Hinsicht gute Partie machen. Susanna ist arm, und Du selbst bist nicht vermögend genug, um ganz und gar aus ben Augen zu laffen, bag --"

Susanna wollte nicht weiter zuhören, und fie hatte in der That auch genug gehört. Verwundeter Stolz und Herzweh jagten ihr bas Blut zu Kopfe und nach ber Bruft, fo baß sie zu ersticken glaubte. Sie sprang schnell auf und eilte, nachdem ste eine Bekannte gebe= ten hatte, Aletten und Harald zu sagen, daß ein hef= tiges Kopfweh fie genöthigt hatre, ben Tang zu ver= laffen, über Fußwegen durch's Thal nach Semb zurud.

Der Abend war schön, Sufanna aber war blind für alle seine Herrlichkeit, sie sah nicht auf den Gang der hellen Sterne, nicht, wie sie sich in den, mit kry= stallreinem Wasser vollstehenden Marienmäntelchen spie= gelten, fie borte nicht bas Rauschen bes Stromes, nicht ben Gesang ber Droffel, benn noch nie hatten Barb'ra und Susanna einen heftigeren Rampf in ihrer Bruft

gefämpft.

"Sie verachten mich — rief die Erstere — sie wer= fen, sie treten mich unter die Füße; sie halten mich nicht für würdig neben ihnen zu gehen, die hochmü= thigen, herzlosen Menschen! Aber haben fie benn ein Recht, sich so zu überheben, weil ich nicht so fein, so gelehrt bin wie sie, weil ich arm bin? Nein, das has ben sie nicht; denn ich kann mir mein Brot verdies nen und meinen Weg durch die Welt gehen, so gut als irgend ein Anderer; und wollen sie stolz sein so werde ich es noch zehnmal mehr sein. Ich brauche mich nicht vor ihnen zu demüthigen. Einer ist so gut als der Andere!"

"Ach — sprach jett Susanna, schmerzliche Thränen stahlen sich über die Wangen — Einer ift boch nicht fo gut, als ber Andere, Erziehung und Bildung ma= den einen großen Unterschied zwischen Menschen und Menschen. Es ift für einen Mann nicht angenehm über bie Unwiffenheit feiner Frau errothen zu muffen, eben so wenig kann man verlangen, daß Jemand Eine, die so alt ist, unterrichten, ober ihr in's Herz se= hen, wie gerne man lernen möchte, und wie kalt spricht Harald, ber wie ich glaube, mir wohlwollte, ben ich so fehr liebe, ben ich mit meinem Leben, von gangem Bergen bienen wollte, von mir, er, ber neulich fo herzlich - Sarald, warum willft Du mein Berg bethören, da es Dich so wenig kummert, was dies Herz empfinden, was es dulden kann? Aber Du (hier fiel Barb'ra wieber ein) Du bentft nur an Dich felbft, Du bift ein Egoift, wie Dein ganzes Geschlecht. Unb er schien meiner so sicher zu sein; er stellte gar nicht bie Frage, ob ich wollte — nein! er fragte nur, ob er in Gnaben wollte. — Mag er wollen! mag er es versuchen! und er soll sehen, daß er sich betrogen hat, ber stolze Gerr; sehen soll er, daß ein armes Mädchen, ohne Berwandte, ohne Freunde, Die einsam in ber Welt basteht, gleichwohl ben abweisen kann, ber sich so zu ihr herabläßt. Seien Sie unbesorgt, Fräulein Alette, die arme, verachtete Susanna ist zu stolz, um sich in Eure hochmüthige Familie einzudrängen, dazu fühlt sie sich wahrhaft zu gut."

Aber Susanna war sehr erbittert und sehr unglücklich, als sie Obiges sagte. Sie war jetzt auf Semb angekommen; aus bem Schlafgemache ber Obristin strahlte Lichtschimmer. Susanna blickte zum Fenster auf und blieb in stummer Verwunderung stehen, denn am Fenster stand Frau Astrid, aber nicht mehr die düstere, kummerumzogene Frau. Die Hände gegen die Brust gepreßt, sah sie zu den hellen Sternen mit dem Ausdruck glühender Dankbarkeit empor; dennoch lag etwas Wildes und Ueberspanntes in ihrem Aussehen, welches die verwunderte und von seltsamen Gefühlen ergriffene Susanna veranlaßte, wiederum bei ihr einzutreten.

Bei Susannens Eintritt in's Zimmer wendete sich die Obristin hastig nach ihr um; sie hielt einen Brief an ihre Brust gepreßt, und sagte mit unruhiger Freude

und einer gewiffen Beftigkeit:

"Nach Bergen! Nach Bergen! Susanna, ich reise Morgen nach Bergen. — Mach Alles zu meiner Absfahrt, so schnell Du kannst, fertig."

Susanna war bestürzt. — "Nach Bergen — stam= melte sie fragend — und der Weg dahin soll um diese

Zeit so schlecht, ja so gefährlich sein."

"Und drohte mir auf dem Wege der Tod, ich würde bennoch reisen — sagte Frau Astrid mit ungeduldiger Energie, — aber ich verlange von Niemandem, mir zu folgen. Du kannst zu Hause bleiben."

" Herr Gott — sagte Susanna, schmerzlich bewegt — ich sprach ja nicht wegen meiner. Könnte ich, um Sie vor einer Gefahr, vor irgend einem Kummer zu bewahren, sterben, ich würde es, weiß Gott, mit Freuden thun. Lassen Sie mich mit nach Bergen reisen."

"Ich bin sehr unglücklich gewesen, Susanna — sprach Frau Astrid weiter, ohne auf Iener aufgeregte Stimmung zu merken — das Leben ist mir eine Last gewesen, ich habe an der himmlischen Gerechtigkeit, an der väterlichen Hand, welche unser Schicksal leitet, gezweiselt, aber jetzt, — jetzt sehe ich — jetzt kann Alles ganz anders werden. — aber gehe Susanna, ich muß mich beruhigen, und auch Du scheinst der Ruhe zu bedürsen. Geh, mein Kind!"

"Nur noch eine Bitte — ich barf boch morgen mit= reisen? Ach, schlagen Sie es mir nicht ab, benn ich folge Ihnen boch."

"Nun gut — jagte Frau Aftrib, fast freudig

bann nutt mir meine Weigerung ja boch nichts."

Sujanna faßte und fußte ihre Sand, und hatte bar= auf so gerne allen Schmerz, alle Liebe, welche ihre Seel' erfüllten, ausweinen mögen, aber die Obristin zog ihre Sand zurud, und hieß fie aufs Neue freund= lich, wiewohl befehlend, geben.

Als sie allein war, heftete sie ihre Augen wieder

auf den Brief, welchen sie in ber Sand hielt. Auf der Außenseite deffelben standen folgende, mit unsicherer Sand geschriebene Worte:

"Meiner Gattin, nach meinem Tobe!"

3m Briefe ftanb folgenbes:

"Ich fühle, daß eine große Beränderung mit "mir vorgehen wird; vermuthlich werde ich fter= "ben, oder wahnsinnig werden. Borher will ich "meiner Gattin noch für die Engelsgeduld, welche ",ne im Leben mit mir gehabt hat, banten, und "ihr fagen, baß ihr Wantel Die Urfache ift, baß "ich in diesem Momente an Tugend, und an "eine gerechte Vorsehung glaube. Ich will ihr "dafür jett auf die einzige mir mögliche Weise "lohnen. Wisse also, geliebte Gattin, daß der "Anabe, ben Du geliebt, und um welchen Du "getrauert haft, nicht tobt ift! Möge bies nauch Deinen Abscheu vor meinem Bergeben mil= "bern, wenn ich Dir betheuere, bag bie Sorge "für Dein Wohlergeben es veranlaßte. Ich war "ganglich ruinirt, und fonnte ben Bedanken Dich "bem Mangel bloßgestellt zu feben, nicht ertra-"gen. Darum schickte ich ben Knaben fort, unb "gab vor: er sei tobt. Er hat feine Roth gelit= "ten; er hat - "

Sier folgen einige unleserliche Zeilen, nach welchen

wieder deutlicher, wie folgt, zu lesen war: "Meine Gedanken verwirren sich, und ich kann "nicht sagen, was ich eigentlich will — Sprich "mit bem früheren Unteroffizier Ronne, ber jest "beim Seezoll in Bergen angestellt ift, er wirb" Sier endete ber Brief; er war ohne Datum, bas Papier war alt und gelb, aber Frau Astrid küßte es unter Freuden= und Dankesthränen, indem sie leise fagte: "O welche Belohnung! welches Licht! barm= bergige, gutige Borfebung!"

18.

Aasgaardereija.

Rebel segeln wild im Sturmesbrange, Belbenschatten suchen Morweg's Riffe. Sier giehn Gifenbote, dort die Schlange, Raben flattern um die boben Schiffe.

Stumme Schatten fleben an ben Maften, Bon den Schwertern weben Blisesfahnen, Tone, Sonn! vom Port, vom flippumfaßten, Rampfesjungfraun giebn gur Macht die Bahnen.

Belbaven.

Susanna ging auf ihr stilles Stubchen, aber in ihr war es nicht ftille; ein harter Rampf warb bort ge= fämpft; jest galt es für sie, sich von allen eigenen Wünschen und Hoffnungen los zu machen. Denn Su-fanna fand jetzt, daß sie, sich selbst fast unbewußt, solche in Bezug auf ihre Herrin und Harald heimlich gehegt hatte. Sie hatte gehofft, burch ihre Liebe, Die Jener zu gewinnen, durch ihre Sorgfalt sich ihnen nothwen= big zu machen, und jest fah fie, wie unendlich wenig

sie für dieselben war. Sie erröthete über ihre Berblendung, und machte es sich zum Vorwurse, daß sie ihrer kleinen Hulda ungetreu gewesen war, da sie sich so fest an fremde Menschen geschlossen, und ihren früheren Lieblinsplan vor neuen Eindrücken und Aussich= ten in Schatten treten gelassen hatte. Susanna be= straste sich hart dafür, nannte sich thörigt und schwach, und beschloß, Harald und den Ort, wo er weilte, zu

fliehen.

"Wenn ich meine Herrin über die gefährlichen Gesbirge begleitet habe — so dachte Susanna — wenn ich sie in Sicherheit und glücklich weiß, dann will ich sie verlassen, sie und ihn und dieses Land — auf ewig. Arm kam ich hieher, ärmer scheide ich von dansnen, denn einen Theil meines Herzens lasse ich hier in dem fremden Lande. Aber ein reines Gewissen nehme ich mit mir in meine Heimath. Sie konnten mich nicht lieben, aber wenn ich erst fort von ihnen bin, so wers den sie vielleicht mit Achtung, vielleicht auch wohl mit Liebe meiner denken."

Die stillen Sterne spiegelten sich in Susannen's Zähren, welche mährend dieses Selbstgesprächs reichlich strömten, und Zähren und Sterne beruhigten ihr Gemüth, und von dem gefaßten Vorsatz fühlte sie sich gestärft.

Darauf richtete sie ihre Gebanken ausschließlich auf das zur Reise Nothwendige, und wandte den übrigen Theil der Nacht theils zu den Vorbereitungen, theils zu Anordnungen im Haushalte an, so daß sie das Haus

mit gutem Gewiffen verlaffen fonnen.

Inzwischen ward die Reise nicht so beeilt, wie man Ansangs die Absicht hatte, indem ein sicherer Führer und gute zuverlässige Pferde zu dem Zug über das Gebirge angeschafft werden mußten, und darauf ging ein großer Theil des folgenden Tages hin; früher als am Morgen des nächsten konnte man nicht aufbrechen.

Der über diesen raschen Entschluß höchlichst verwunderte Harald hatte die Reise, indem er die Schwierigkeiten, ja Gefahren in dieser Jahreszeit, (benn vom Anfang des Septembers an kann man jeden Tag Schnee und Unwetter in den Gebirgen erwarten) vorspiegelte, zu vereiteln gesucht. Die Obristin aber blieb, ohne sich näher zu erklären, fest in ihrem Entschlusse, und Ha= rald versprach Alles so einzurichten, daß die Reise so schnell und sicher als möglich vor sich gehen könne. Man hatte die Wahl zwischen vier gleich beschwerlichen Gebirgswegen, die aus dieser Gegend von Hallingsthal nach bem Stift Bergen führen, und von welchen ber fürzeste der ist, welcher nach Hardanger geht; für dies sen bestimmte sich Frau Astrid, man brauchte aber drits tehalb Tage, um ihn zurückzulegen. Harald, welcher den Weg kannte, und sich erbot, im Nothfall als Weg-weiser zu dienen, schickte sich an, die Obristin auf dem abenteuerlichen Zuge zu begleiten. Alette sollte indessen mit ihrem Alf und dem in Hallingsthal wohnenden Dheim und beffen Familie Die Reise nach Drontheim, wo Harald, seinem Versprechen gemäß, später mit ih= nen zu Alettens Hochzeit zusammentreffen wollte, an= treten

Harald hatte Susannen nach der Ursache dieser sons derbaren Reise fragen wollen, aber Susanna konnte ihm heute gar keine Rede stehen, so viel hatte sie sos wohl inner= als außerhalb des Hauses anzuordnen, und dann waren Karina, Larina und Peter beständig um sie. Susanna freute sich, daß sie durch ihre Gesichäfte eine gute Ausrede hatte, Harald's Gesellschaft und einer Unterredung mit ihm auszuweichen. Eine gewisse Bitterkeit sowohl gegen ihn, als gegen Alette, kochte in ihrem Herzen.

Unter vielen edlen und werthvollen Fähigkeiten hat der Mensch auch die, sich selbst beurtheilen und verurs theilen zu können. Wenn wir mit Recht gegen Jemand

aufgebracht find, wenn er uns burch Wort und That verletzt, und von sich entfernt hat, so sollten wir auf diese Fähigkeit zählen, und sie versöhnend auf unser Gefühl wirken lassen. Denn während wir wegen seines Versehens erbittert sind, weint er selbst vielleicht im Bersehens erbittert sind, weint er selbst vielleicht im Stillen darüber, wacht in den stummen nächtlichen Stunsden, um in seines Gewissens strengem Heiligthume sich selbst schonungslos zu bestrafen, und je edler der Mensch, desto größer seine Qual, selbst über Fehler, die vor dem Nichterstuhle der Welt viel geringer, oder gar nichts sind, ja er verzeiht es sich im Grunde selbst nie, wenn er auch das, was er verbrochen hat, wieder gutmachen kann, und diese Kossnung ist in solchen quals vollen Stunden der einzige Trost.

So wär' auch aus Susanna's Seele jedes herbe Gessühl gewichen, wenn sie sehen gekonnt hätte, wie sehr Harald mit sich selbst unzusrieden war, wie ernstlich er sich über die Worte, die er gestern beim Tanze, ohne es wirklich ernstlich damit zu meinen, hatte fallen lassen,

es wirklich ernstlich damit zu meinen, hatte fallen lassen, Vorwürfe machte, und wie mißvergnügt er über das, Aletten gegebene, Versprechen und den in Folge ih= rer Befürchtungen und Rathschläge gefaßten Borfat

Dieses Mißvergnügen nahm noch zu, als er an Susfanna's geschwollenen Augenlidern sah, daß sie viel geweint hatte, und in ihrem ganzen Wesen eine gewisse Unruhe und Niedergeschlagenheit, welche gegen ihre gewöhnliche Munterkeit und Lebhaftigkeit stark abstach, bemerkte. Unruhig, und voll banger Ahnung fragte er, ihr mit forschenden Blicken folgend, sich selbst über die Ursache.

Die Obristin erschien nicht beim Mittagstisch, und bie Anderen, ausgenommen Lexow, welcher sie Alle ver= gebens mit feiner guten Laune aufzuheitern ftrebte, fa=

Ben ftill und verstimmt ba.

mar.

Nachmittags beim Raffee wollte Sufanna nich ftill

fortschleichen, um vor der Reise einer kranken Dienstsfrau einige Arzeneien und von ihr genähte Kinderskleiber zu bringen, Harald, welcher eine Weile lang das Barometer betrachtet und, als sie der Thüre zuging, zu ahnen schien, wendete sich schnell zu ihr, und sagte:

"Sie benken doch wohl nicht daran, jest auszugehen? Es ist nicht rathsam, innerhalb weniger Minuten wer= ben wir wahrscheinlich einen heftigen Sturm haben."

"Davor habe ich feine Furcht! antwortete Sufanna,

und wollte gehen."

"Aber Sie kennen unsere Stürme nicht — rief Harald — Lerow, komm her! sieh einmal bahin! — dabei zeigte er auf das Barometer, indem er halblaut sagte: das Quecksilber ist seit einer halben Stunde um zwei Grad gefallen, jetzt sinkt es wieder, jetzt steht es beinahe auf: Erdbeben — im Augenblicke haben wir einen echten Bergröse *) hier."

Lerow schüttelte bedenklich das Haupt und sagte: Es sieht um die morgende Reise schlecht aus! Aber ich glaube, daß Eure Stürme hier doch nur Kindersspiele gegen die sind, welche wir in gewissen Gegenden des Nordlandes haben." — Damit ging Alf zu seiner

Allette, welche fragend und unruhig auf ihn fab.

Harald eilte Susannen nach, und fand sie, ein Bündel im Arme, an der Pforte, im Begriff zu gehen. Er trat

ihr in ben Weg und fagte voll Ernftes:

"Sie fonnen nicht geben! Ich versichere Ihnen, baß

es gefährlich ift."

"Wieso gefährlich?" fragte Susanna finster und mit einem inneren, hartnäckigen Entschluß, Harald zum Troze zu handeln.

"Alasgaardreija! antwortete Harald lachend — und bamit ift nicht zu spaßen. Bald kommt sie baber ge=

^{*)} Rose oder Ryse (Micse) so heißt in Norwegen der flarke Wirbelwind, welcher zwischen den Klippen heult, und in gewissen Gebirgegegenden so sehr gefährlich ist.

ritten und kann Sie mit sich nehmen, wenn Sie nicht daheim bleiben. Nein! Sie sollen jest nicht gehen!" Damit faste er ihre Hand, um sie wieder in's Haus zu führen.

Susanna, welche glaubte er scherze auf die gewöhn= liche Weise, machte, da sie gar nicht zum Scherzen auf= gelegt war, ihre Hand los, und sagte erröthend und

ftolz:

"Ich werde gehen, mein Herr! ich werde gehen, weil ich es will, und Sie haben kein Recht, mir bas zu verbieten."

Harald schaute sie verwundert an und sagte barauf mit einem Tone, der dem Susannens ziemlich ähnlich war:

"Wenn ich Ihnen nicht verbieten kann zu gehen, so können Sie mir nicht verbieten Sie zu begleiten,"

"Ich wünsche gern allein zu gehen!" fagte Sufanna

tropig und ging.

"Ich gleichfalls!" sagte Harald in demselben Tone und begleitete sie doch immer in einer Entfernung von funfzehn bis zwanzig Schritten. Er trat in die Küchensthüre, und sagte zu denen, welche darinnen waren: "Gebt Acht auf's Feuer, und löscht es beim ersten Windstoß aus, wir bekommen einen Orkan! —"In diesem Augenblicke kam Alssero winselnd und

In diesem Augenblicke kam Alsiero winselnd und heulend auf Susanna zugesprungen, sprang ihr, als wolle er sie am Weitergehen hindern, mit den Pfoten auf die Schultern. Als sie ihn aber fortstieß, rannte er, ängstlich, sich zusammendrückend, als suche er Schutz

vor einer Gefahr, in fein Saus.

Das Wetter war schön, ber Wind stille, der Himmel flar; Nichts schien ein heranziehendes Unwetter zu prophezeien, als der Rauch der, wie er aus den Hützten im Thale emporstieg, niedergeprest wurde, und über die Dächer hinab dem Boden zurollte.

Susanna ging rasch ihres Weges, während sie beftändig Haralb's Schritte etwas hinter sich zu hören glaubte, aber sich nicht umzusehen wagte. Indem sie zufälliger Weise die Augen zum Himmel emporschlug, gewahrte sie eine kleine, weise, der phantastischen Figur eines Drachen nicht unähnliche Wolke, pfeilschnell über das Thal heraufkommen. Gleich darauf hörte man ein starkes pfeisendes Getöse, bei dem Susanna nach den Höhen, von wo sie Etwas wie eine Nauchsäule aufsteigen sah, blickte. In dem nämlichen Augenblicke war Harald an ihrer Seite und sagte ernst und schnell:

"Auf die Erde! werfen sie sich zu Boben, auf ber

Stelle!"

Susanna wollte Einwendungen machen, ward aber von Harald umfaßt, vom Boden aufgehoben, und im nächsten Augenblicke lag sie da, mit dem Gesichte auf der Erde. Sie fühlte einen heftigen Luftdruck, hörte ganz in ihrer Nähe einen Knall wie einen Pistolenschuß und darauf ein starkes Gekrach und Geprassel, worauf ein Getöse, wie von einem allmählig fortrolzlenden Donner erfolgte — dann war Alles still.

Susanna erhob, gänzlich von dem Vorgefallenen betäubt, ihr Haupt, und blickte umher, indem sie sich langsam erhob. Todtenstille herrschte jetz überall, nicht einmal ein Graßhalm rührte sich, aber ganz in ihrer Nähe waren zwei Bäume umgerissen worden, Steine waren von dem Felsen losgerissen und in's Thal hin-

abgerollt.

Unruhig fah sich Susanna nach Harald, der nirgends zu erblicken war, um, und dachte an die Erzählung von Aasgaardreija. In ihrer Angst rief sie seinen Namen, und groß war ihre Freude, als seine Stimme ihr

antwortete.

Sie erblickte ihn in einer geringen Entfernung, als er sich getade langsam an einer zackigen Felswand emporrichtete. Er war bleich und schien Schmerzen zu empfinden. Einzig mit Susannens Sicherheit beschäftigt, war Harald selbst zu spät dazu gekommen, sich

in die bemuthige Stellung, welche er Susanna hatte annehmen lassen, zu bringen, und war vom Wirbel= winde erfaßt und hart gegen die obenerwähnte Fels= wand geschleubert worden, wobei er einen berben Stoß über bem linken Schluffelbeine und ber linken Schul= ter erhielt. Er versicherte trop dessen der um ihn ängst= lich besorgten Susanna, daß es nichts zu bedeuten hätte, daß es bald wieder besser werden würde, und fügte icherzend bingu.

"Satte ich nun nicht Recht, baß mit ber Aasgaards= reija nicht zu spaßen ist? Wir sind auch noch nicht gang befreit. In einigen Augenblicken haben wir fie wieder über uns, und sobald wir es im Berge poltern und pfeisen hören, so thun wir am Besten, uns zu bemüthigen; sonst kann es uns schlecht gehen! —

Kaum hatte Harald biese Worte gesagt, so hörte man auch schon bas Signal vom Berge, und ber Dr=kan kam eben so gewaltsam, aber auch eben so schnell vorübergehend, als das erste Mal; in einigen Minuten war Alles wieder ruhig.

"Jest können wir wieder einige Minuten frei Obem holen — fagte Barald, indem er aufstand und fich forschend umsah — am Besten ift es aber wohl, wir suchen jest ein Dach über den Kopf zu bekommen, um vor dem Steinfall geschützt zu sein. Dort springt eine Bergplatte, vor, lassen Sie uns dahin eilen, ehe der Orkan wieder hier ist. Wenn ich nicht irre, so haben bereits andere Wanderer benfelben Gebanken gehabt

Wirklich hatten auch schon zwei Personen, bie Ba= rald bald erkannte, por ihnen, Schutz unter ber Berg= platte gesucht. Der Ültere von Beiden war der Führer, den Harald bestellt hatte, um den Weg über das Ge-birge zu zeigen, es war ein schöner, alter Mann in ber Hallingstracht; ber Jungere war fein Enkel, ein tüchtiger Buriche von fechszehn Jahren, ber gleichfalls die Reise mitmachen sollte. Sie waren auf ihrem Wege nach Semb vom Unwetter überrascht worben.

Es war vielleicht sowohl Harald als auch Susannen angenehm, bei der jetzt zwischen ihnen herrschenden Spannung, von einem Alleinbeisammensein durch die Dazwischenkunft biefer Leute befreit zu fein. Bon ihrem Zufluchtsorte aus hatte man eine weite Aussicht über das Thal, und sie richteten ihre Ausmerksamkeit auf das, was sich dort zutrug. Man sah den Rauch nicht mehr aus den Hütten emporsteigen, ein Zeichen, daß man, wie es bei diesen Orkanen zu geschehen pflegt, bas Feuer überall auslöschte; man fah mehre Pferbe, welche auf der Weide waren, sich unbeweglich, den Kopf nach der Seite, woher der Orfan kam gerichtet, hin-stellen; auf diese Art theilten sie den Windstoß, und konnten seiner Kraft widerstehen; in einer etwas wei-teren Entsernung zeigte sich ein sonderbares Lustschau= spiel. Man sah bicke Wolkenschaaren von entgegenge= - fetten Seiten über ben himmel baberfturmen, und fich im Sturm vorwärts und ruchwärts treiben; Die ab= sonderlich geformten Massen rückten gegen einander vor, und lieferten ein förmliches Treffen in der Luft, welches geraume Zeit dauerte; endlich mußten aber die vom schwächeren Winde angeführten Kolonnen sich zurückziehen, die siegreichen rückten stürmisch vor, und breiteten sich über das ganze Himmelsgewölbe, welches sich jetzt finster und bleischwer zur Erde ab-wärts senkte, aus. Inzwischen begann das Unwetter etwas nachzulassen, und nach ungefähr drei Stunden hatte es sich so weit besänstigt, daß die Gesellschaft unter ber Felsplatte sich auf ben Beimweg machen konnte, wohin sich Susanna, sowohl ihrer Herrin wegen, als wegen Haralds sehnte, dessen Quetschung ihm offenbar große Schmerzen verursachte, wenn er dieselben auch unter Lebhaftigkeit und Redseligkeit zu verbergen suchte.

Ohne weiteren Schaben, wenn auch nicht ohne Gefahr, kamen sie, glücklich auf Semb an, wo man mittlerweile ihretwegen in großer Unruhe gewesen war. Der Wind legte sich gegen Abend ganz und gar. Ha= rald's Schulter wurde mit zweckbienlichen warmen Umsichlägen gebäht; er erklärte bald, daß aller Schmerz vorüber sei, und blieb, obgleich ihm Alle eifrig abriezthen, hartnäckig bei seinem Entschlusse, die Obristin

über bas Gebirge zu geleiten.

Die arme Susanna bereute ibren Eigensinn, der an Haralds Unglücksfall Schuld gewesen, sie war so danktar für seine ihr bewiesene Sorgfalt, daß alle bittere Gefühle gegen ihn, und gegen Alette aus ihrem Herzen schwanden. Sie fühlte jett nur ein inniges, fast schwerzeliches Bedürsniß ihnen ihre Ergebenheit zu bezeugen, ihnen eine Freude machen zu können; sie hätte gerne ihre linke Hand darum gegeben.

19.

Die Gebirgsreise.

Entfleuch! Entfleuch so schnell wie der Wind, Sieh, wie es grinst hinter Fangraftind! D. Wergeland.

Der Zug, welcher sich am folgenden Morgen zeitig von Heimthal aus über die Usteberge in Bewegung septe, sah nichts weniger als fröhlich aus. Er bewegte sich auch in einem dicken Nebel, der über dem Thale hing, alle Höhen einwoh, und die Aussicht in die Höhe und in die Weite benahm. Voran ritt der Führer, der alte zuverlässige Hallingsche Bauer, dessen fräftige, bohe Gestalt einen Eindruck der Sicherheit auf die Volgenden machte; dann kann die Obristin, darauf Susanna und nach dieser Harald mit dem Arm in der Binde. Der junge Bursche und ein Bauerknecht,

die zwei Pferbe, die das Gepäck der Reisenden tru=

gen, schlossen ben Zug.

Nach und nach, als sie höher hinauffamen, hellte sich die Luft auf, die Reisenden stiegen über die Regionen ber Düsterheit; bald sahen sie die blaue Farbe bes Simmels, Die Sonne begrußte fie mit ihren Strah= len, und beleuchtete bie wilben, feltsamen Wegenben, welche sie jett umgaben. Auf Susannas jugenblichen, offenen Sinn wirkte Dieser Anblick mit wunderbarer Kraft; sie fühlte sich immer freier, immer leichter, und schien, indem sie mit flaren Augen vorwärts blickte, jeden Streit, jede Qual hinter fich gelaffen zu haben, und einer Zukunft voll Licht und Rube aufwärts ent= gegenzugehen; benn ihre Herrin sollte ja glücklich wer= ben, und Susanna sollte mit freiem Berzen nicht mehr gefesselt von selbstischen Empfindungen, leicht den Beruf ber Pflicht, und ben Willen ber Borfehung befol= gen. Go fühlte, fo bachte fie.

Der Weg war ungebahnt, oft steil und schrecklich; aber sicheren Schrittes gingen die Pferbe barüber bin, und so kam man nach Verlauf einiger Stunden zu ei= ner Sennerhütte, welche am Ufer bes Uftemaffers, ei= nes Binnensees, am Fuß des Hallingskarvs lag. Diese Sennhütte liegt oberhalb der Birkenvegetation, und de= ren Umgebungen tragen ein farkes Gepräge bes eigentlichen Gebirgscharafters, aber ihre von ben Schneebergen stets bewässerten Rasenpläte standen noch im herrlichen Grun, und buntgeflectte Biebheerden tum= melten sich auf ihnen umber. Wie ein schimmerndes Silberband flatterten bie Bache zwischen ben grünen Abhängen und ben finstern Felsenklippen hervor. Die Sonne schien jest hell, und man beglückwünschte ein= ander zu ben heiterer werdenden Reiseaussichten. In bieser Sennhütte raftete bie Gesellschaft einige Stun= ben, und nahm ein stärkendes Frühftuck von ben ein= fachen, hier zu Lande gebräuchlichen Gerichten zu fich.

Jedem Gast ward eine Schale mit Lessetriangeln*) mit einem Roggenmehltuchen von der Größe eines Tellers darauf, vorgesetz; große vierectige Butterstücke, und eine Schüssel herrlicher Gebirgsssische wurden auf den Tisch gestellt; die Kanne mit Hardangerbier sehlte nicht, und ein junges Mädchen mit blonden Haarslechten, hellgelbem Lederkamisol, schwarzem Faltenrock und einem rothen, um den Hals geknüpsten Tuche, und einem so schönen und unschuldsvollen Gesichte, wie jemals eine Idylle es ihrer Hirtin zuschrieb, wartete den Gästen auf, und unterhielt sie mit ihrem einsachen, munteren Geplauder.

Nach bem Frühstück setzte man die Reise fort. Auf der Höhe von Ustesjell sah man zwei große Bergstresten ihre wogenförmigen Rücken in die Schneeregionen sich erheben. Es waren der Hallingskarv und der Hal-

lingjokul.

Langsam schritt bie Karavane ben Berg: "Bar" hinauf. Nach und nad, verschwand alle Baumvegeta= tion, ber Boden war fahl, ober nur mit einer Art ichwärzlichen Geftrupps bebeckt; bazwischen lagen Schneebaufen, welche je höher hinauf man kam, besto gröger wurden. Die Aussicht rund umber hatte etwas Raltes, Unheimliches, aber Sufanna fühlte fich von biefem wilben und für fie neuen Schauspiele auf eine eigene Weise belebt; hierzu trug auch noch ber alte hallin= gische = Bauer bas Seinige bei, indem er, mahrend fie burch biefe öben Gebirgsgegenden bahinzogen, ber Ge= sellschaft mancherlei von "ben Unterirdischen," welche bort gewöhnlich ihren Wohnsit haben, erzählte, und welche er als ein Zauberpack von kleinen, eklichen, bleichen ober bläulichen menschenähnlichen, grauge= fleideten, und ichwarze Ropfbedeckungen tragenden Gestalten beschrieb. Sie gogen oft - so sagte er -

^{*)} Lesse sind dunne Ruchen von Teig, welche zerschnitten und geröstet verden.

Menschen mit sich hinab in ihre unterirdischen Wohnungen, und thäten sie ab, und wenn auch ein Mensch
lebendig ihren Händen entkäme, so bliebe er doch sein
ganzes Leben hindurch schwermüthig und wahnsinnig,
und hätte kein Glück auf Erden. — Einige Menschen
versolgten sie, Andere aber beschützten sie, und brächten
denselben Glück und Vermögen. Der Hallingbauer
war von dem wirklichen Dasein dieser Wesen vollkom=
men überzeugt, und sagte: er hätte selbst ein Mal in
einer Gebirgsgegend einen Mann gesehen, der schnell
in die Erde gesunken und verschwunden wäre.

Einer von seinen Freunden hätte ein Mal im Walde einen ganzen Hof mit Haus, Menschen und Wieh ge= sehen, bei seinem Näherkommen wären diese Letteren

aber verschwunden.

Harald äußerte, daß die Einbildung hier wohl mit im Spiele gewesen, aber der Alte suchte seine Geschichte durch folgendes Citat aus "Hans Lauridsens Geister=

buch" zu befräftigen:

"Der Teufel hat viele dienstbare Genossen, wie Erlsweiber, Erlmänner, Zwerge, Kobolde, Nachtmahner, Erdgnomen mit glühenden Feuerstangen, Währwölfe, Ungeheuer, Gespenster welche sich den Leuten, wenn

fie fterben follen, zeigen."

Alls Harald lächend noch Zweifel äußerte, sagte der Alte eifrig: "Aber es steht ja in der Bibel, daß Aller Kniee, sowohl Derer im Himmel, als auf Erden, als unter der Erde, sich vor dem Herren beugen sollen! und wie sollten wohl die unter der Erde anders sein, als die Unterirdischen? Und — fuhr er heiter mit einem schelmischen Blick auf Susanna sort — mein Kind, nimm Du Dich in Acht, wenn die Dämmerung kommt, denn das ist ihre Zeit umherzustreisen, junge Mädchen mögen sie besonders gern leiden, und ziehen sie gerne in ihre Wohnungen. Nimm Dich in Acht! holen sie Dich einmal in ihre Kirche hinab, (denn sie

haben auch eine Kirche tief unten in ber Erbe), so bestommst Du die Sonne und Gottes klaren Himmel nie wieder zu sehen, so lange Du lebst; und es ist nicht ansgenehm, bei den Unholden da unten zu wohnen, das kannst Du glauben."

Susannen grauste es unwillfürlich bei biesem Scherz. Sie warf einen Blick auf die wilden Felsgestalten rings umber; diese waren, wie ihr der hallingische Bauer verssicherte, versteinerte Spukgestalten, Riesen und Riesinsnen. Harald bemerkte den badurch auf Susannen gesmachten Eindruck, aber er, dem es sonst ein Vergnügen gemacht batte, ihre Phantasie zu erschrecken, war jetzt ganz beruhigender Verstand, und ließ sein Licht vor Sussannen in der Finsterniß des Aberglaubens leuchten.

Die Reisenden fliegen immer höber, Die Gegend mard immer ober. Diese gange Gebirgsgegend ift gleichsam wie mit Steinbloden von verschiedener Große befaet, und biefer haben fich bie Menfchen bedient, um fich in einer Gegend, wo man fich ohne biefelben unfehlbar ver= irren wurde, Wegweiter zu bilben. Man bat zu bie= fem Bebufe Steine auf Die größeren Blode, in ber Rich= tung, welche ber Weg nimmt, gelegt, und wenn ein Stein berabfallt, fo fieht es ber Borbeiziehende fur eine bei= lige Bflicht an, benselben wieber aufzusegen. - Ero= ftende Leiter, nennt Professer Sanften in feiner inte= reffanten Gebirgsreife, Dieje Wachter, "benn fie find auf Diefer Wanderung Die einzigsten Denichenspuren, und wenn man einige Zeit hindurch feinen folchen Mert= itein gesehen bat, jo vertreibt ber nachfte, ben man ent= bedt, Die aufsteigende Angst burch Die tröftliche Ber= beißung: Du bist noch auf bem rechten Wege! -- "

In dunklem oder nebligem Wetter aber find biese freundlichen Wächter von fast keinem Nugen, und die Reise ist dann äußerst gefährlich: Man verirrt sich leicht und erstiert in dieser Eiswüste oder wird von den Schneeabgründen verschlungen. Die so Umgekommenen

werden nach ihrem Tobe "Draugen" genannt, und fie follen in ben bufteren Gebirgspäffen fputen. Der Gub= rer zeigte auf eine nahe am Wege befindliche Stelle, wo man bie Leichen zweier Sandelsleute, Die eines Berbites auf dem Gebirge von einem wüthigen Wetter überfallen und dabei umgekommen waren, gefunden hatte. Er er= zählte dies mit großer Gleichgültigkeit, denn es kom= men in jedem Jahre auf biefen Bergen Menfchen um's Leben, und bieje Todesfälle werden für nicht schlimmer als die anderer Art gehalten, in Sufannen aber began= nen unheimliche Gebanken aufzusteigen; gleichwohl war fein Grund zur Befürchtung eines Unglude vorhanden, benn bas Wetter war schön, und bie Reise ging, wenn auch muhfam, boch ficher und gut von Statten, und mard bis gegen Abend ununterbrochen fortgefett. Da man in Dieser Nacht nicht mehr bis zu einer Sennhütte gelangen konnte, so wollte man das Nachtlager an ei= ner "Monsbuheja" genannten Stelle aufschlagen, weil man ba herum Gras für bie Pferbe fand; unfere Reifenden gelangten auch glücklich furze Zeit vor Sonnen= untergang babin; hier fanden fie eine halb von Natur halb von Menschenhanden gebaute Grotte, die um ben Gingang liegenden Steine waren von letteren babin gerollt. Die Grottenwände waren mit Moos bewach= fen und mit in die Bergwandrigen gesteckten Rennthier= hörnern geziert. Schnell hatte Sufanna hier für ihre ermudete Berrin, welche ihr bafur mit einem fo freund= lichen Blicke, wie noch nie, bankte, ein bequemes Rube= bett aus Mantelfäcken, Mänteln und Shawls zurecht= gemacht.

Harald und die Burschen hatten inzwischen für die Pferde gesorgt und sich nach Feuerung für die Nacht umgesehen. Ein paar hundert Ellen von der Grotte entfernt, floß zwischen eisbedeckten Ufern ein Strom; an dem Uferrande dieses Stroms und der Schneebäcke fanden sich Wurzeln von versaulten Wachholderbüschen,

Bergweiden und trocknes Haidefraut vor, dieses Alles sammelte man und trug es an einen Platz außerhalb der Grotte, wo man den Holzstoß für die Nacht ans

zünden wollte.

Unterdessen erstieg Susanna eine kleine Anhöhe unweit der Grotte, und sah die Sonne hinter dem Hallingjökel untergehen, die wie eine rothe Feuerkugel am Rande des unabsehbaren Schneegebirges stand und seine buntwechselnden Streiflichter von Purpur, Gelb und Blau auf die Wolken am Himmel und die Schneeflächen unten zuckte. Es war ein herrlicher Anblick!

"Guter Gott! wie groß und herrlich!" rief Susanna unwillfürlich aus, und beugte sich, ihre Hände gegen die Brust gepreßt, gleichsam anbetend vor dem sinken=

ben Herrscher bes Tages.

"Ja, groß und herrlich!" antwortete es neben ihr im milden Widerhall. Susanna sah sich um, und erblickte Harald, der neben ihr stand. Da standen sie, beide allein von der untergehenden Sonne beleuchtet, mit denselben Gedanken, von denselben Empfindungen, innig erwärmt und anbetend in der öden, todten Wüstenei. Susanna konnte dem Gefühle tiefer und seierlicher Bewegung, welche ihr Herz erfüllte, nicht widerstehen, sie reichte Harald die Hand und ihr thränenvoller Blick schien zu sagen: Frieden! Frieden! Susanna betrachtete dies wie einen Abschied von ihm — aber es war ein Abschied in Liebe. In dieser Stunde hätte sie gern die ganze Welt an ihr Herz gedrückt. Sie fühlte sich über allen Streit, allen Groll, alle Kleinlichkeit erhaben. Das große Schauspiel hatte etwas Großes in ihr geweckt und in ihrem Antlitz strahlte "Sanna" in schöner und sanster Verklärung.

Harald schien bagegen gar nicht an Abschied zu benken, benn er hielt Susanna's Hand fortwährend in der seinigen und wollte reden, aber da zog sie dieselbe ha= stig, wenn auch nicht unfreundlich, weg, und wendete

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sich um, indem sie sagte: wir mussen jest an die Abend: mahlzeit benken.

Das Feuer des Holzstoßes flammte ihr munter ent= gegen und am öftlichen Himmel stieg der Mond aus

rojenfarbigen Wolken empor.

Bald hatte Sufanna fich lebhaft und fröhlich beim Keuer zu thun gemacht; aus Bouillontafeln und schon gekochten Graupen, welche fie mitgenommen hatte, be= reitete fie eine vortreffliche Suppe, in ber ein Stud von einer Kalbsbruft aufgewärmt wurde. Während bies fochte, theilte fie Brot, Kafe und Branntwein unter die männliche Begleitung, und sorgte besonders freundlich für ben alten Gubrer. Sarald ließ ihr biefe Beschäf= tigung, ohne ihr im Mindesten behülflich zu sein. Er faß auf einem etwas bavon entfernten Stein auf fein Teuergewehr gestütt und betrachtete ihr von ber Flamme beleuchtetes, gutes und frommes Gesicht, ihre raschen Bewegungen und Behändigkeit in Allem, was fie vornahm. Er bachte an ihr gefühlvolles Berg, ihren offnen Ginn, ihren Tleiß, an die Abende bes verfloffenen Winters, als er ihr noch vorlas und erzählte, und wie fie lauschte und was fie dabei fühlte. Mit einem Male schien es ibm, als ob bas Ibeal eines glücklichen Lebens, welches bereits feit einem Jahre feinem Beifte vorgeschwebt hatte, bier jett gang nabe mare. Da ftand es an ben Flam= men des Nachtfeuers und von ihnen beleuchtet. Allet= tens Warnungen flogen barüber hinweg wie ein fort= eilender Nachtnebel ohne Körper, ohne Substanz. Er fah sich als Besiger eines Grundstücks, welches er, fo wie Oberlin das gesunkene Steinthal, veredelte, fab nich von Untergebenen und Nachbaren, zu beren Glück er wirksam beitrug, umgeben, er sah sich in seinem Sause — er betrachtete es beim prüfendsten Lichte an einem langen Winterabend, aber es bleichte babei nicht ab, benn er fah fich wie vordem im Winterabend mit Gu= fanna, -- und boch nicht fo wie vorbem, fie faß ihm

jest näher, denn sie war seine Frau, und er las ihr vor wie in früheren Zeiten — und freute sich ihrer lebhaften, warmen Theilnahme, dazwischen aber ließ er sein Auge auf ihr und dem zu ihren Füßen in der Wiege liegenden Kinde ruhen, während Susanna wie früher auf dem Gebirge in der Abendsonne auf ihn sah. Die tanzend über den Schnee glänzenden Flammen waren jest die seines eigenen Heerdes, und es war seine Gattin, welche froh und gastfrei Glück und Wonne um sich her verbreitend, dabei geschäftig war.

"Clender Plunder, diese feinere Bildung — dachte er — die kein Herz, keine Seele, kein Seelenvermögen wie die dieses Mädchens schaffen können!" Ex vermochte es nicht seine Augen von Susannen abzuwensten, mit jedem Augenblicke kam sie ihm schöner vor. Der süße Liebeszauber hatte sich seiner bemächtigt.

Das Abendessen war inzwischen fertig geworden und Harald ward dazu gerusen. Welch Wunder, daß er nach einer ermüdenden Tagereise, und nach den noch vor Rurzem angestellten Betrachtungen, die von Susanna zubereiteten Gerichte über alle Beschreibung vortrefflich und schmackhaft fand. Er vermiste nur Susannens Anwesenheit dabei, diese aber war in der Grotte und hielt vor der Obristin knieend eine Schale mit Suppe und zählte mit stiller Freude jeden Lössel, den ihre Gebieterin mit sichtbarem Wohlbehagen an ihre Lippen brachte, und dabei, als die Schale geleert war, sagte: "Das war die beste Suppe, die ich jemals aß, so viel ist gewiß, Susanna, Du bist äußerst geschickt." — Es war das erste Mal, daß die Obristin auf das Essen gemerkt, und das erste Lob, das Susanna von deren Mund erhalten hatte — und keine Suppe — nicht einmal Nektar — kann so lieblich, so belebend schmecken, als das erste Lob aus geliebtem Munde.

Als Susanna die Grotte verließ, ward sie von Ha= rald's Blicken begrüßt, und diese sprachen ein fast un= widerstehliches Entzücken für ein so liebebedürftiges Herz, als bas Sufannens war, und in ihrem gerührten und bankbaren Berzen glaubte fie, sie würde in alle Ewig= feit auf bem Gebirge sein und schaffen, und ben ge= liebten Menschen, welche ihr hier zuerst ihre Lippen vor

ihrem Gerzen eröffneten, Suppe kochen. Man bereitete sich hierauf zur Nacht, welche hell aber kalt zu werden versprach, vor. Die Bauern la= gerten fich um bas Feuer, Frau Aftrid, welche für Sa= ralds Schulter besorgt war, bat ihn in die Grotte zu kommen, wo man gegen die kalte Luft geschützt war, er aber wollte braußen Wacht halten und setzte sich, in feinen Mantel gehüllt, an's Feuer. Sufanna legte fich fachte zu ben Füßen ihrer Herrin, welche sie baburch warm erhalten wollte. Seltsame Gebilde schwebten, mah= rend ihre Augenlider geschlossen waren, vor ihrem in= neren Gesichte vorüber, Schnee = und Eisgestalten nä= herten sich ihr und schienen sie umringen zu wollen, entwichen aber plötzlich und schmolzen vor warmen Lie= besblicken, die Sonne schien herrlich, und wonnige fuße Befühle burchftrömten fie - unter biefen schlief fie ein. Dann stellte fich ein neues Bild bar. Sie war wieber in Beimthal, stand an Stromes Ufer und fah mit einer Art furchtsamer Bewunderung nach dem jenseitigen Ufer, denn dort schimmerte zwischen den düsteren Zweigen etwas Weißes, zuerst in unbestimmten Umrissen, dann aber immer beutlicher hervor, und als es vom Strome ber näherkam, sah Susanna, baß es ein Kind war, und fie erkannte in demselben ihre kleine Sulda, aber bas Kind war bleich wie der Tod, und Zähren rollten von seinen schneeweißen Wangen, während es seine kleinen Arme Susannen entgegenstreckte und ihren Namen rief. Susanna wollte fich in die Wellen fturzen, welche fie von Sulda trennten, aber fie vermochte es nicht, fie fühlte sich von einer unsichtbaren Macht gefesselt. Wäh= rend sie mit unsäglicher Qual rang, sich zu befreien, merkte sie, daß es Harald war, der sie so fesselte, und er fah so kalt, so streng aus, und Susanna empfand

zugleich Liebe und Saß in ihrem Bergen. Die garte Rinderstimme rief auf's Neue in angstlichen Tonen, und Sufanna fah jest bie kleine Schwester auf bie Steine am Strande niedersinken und Die weißen Bel= len über sie zusammenschlagen. Mit einer Empfindung wilden Berzweifelns erwachte Sufanna aus dem Traume, und sprang auf. Der falte Schweiß stand ihr vor ber Stirne, und sie sah sich verwildert umber. Düster wölbte sich über ihr die Grotte, und bas Feuer braußen warf einen rothen, flackernden Schein auf die phanta= ftisch verzierten Wände. Susanna ging leife aus ber Grotte; fie wollte ben himmel, Die Sterne feben; fie mußte bie freie, frische Luft athmen um fich von ber bedrückenden Sige bes Traumes zu erholen. Aber feine Sterne blickten strahlend auf fie hernieder, benn ber Simmel war von einem grauen Wolfenbache bebeckt, und der bleiche, zwischendurchschimmernde Mondschein warf ein trauriges Licht über bie tobte Gegend mit ih= ren buftern, grauenhaften Geftalten. Das Feuer war niedergebrannt und lohte, wie träumerisch, nur noch hier und dort mit rothen Flammen auf, die barum ge= lagerten Bauern schliefen tief. Susanna fah Harald nicht an biesem Orte, und bas war ihr gerade jest lieb. Um die traurigen Gindrucke, Die fie empfangen hatte, zu verwischen, nahm Susanna einen Wasserfrug und ging damit zum Strom hinab, um Wasser zum mor= genden Frühstück zu schöpfen. Auf dem Wege dahin sah sie Harald, seine Büchse auf dem Rücken in eini= ger Entfernung von der Grotte auf und abgehen; gleichwohl gelangte fie, unbemerft von ihm, zum Fluß, und füllte ihren Krug mit schneevermischtem Wasser. Die kleine körperliche Bemühung that ihr wohl, aber bie einsame Wanderung war übrigens wenig geeignet, ben Sinn zu erheitern. Die Landschaft war unbeschreib= lich bufter und zu bem eintonigen Rauschen ber Schnee= bache gesellten sich bann und wann Windstöße, welche grausigpfeifend wie Riesenseufzer burch bie Ginobe ba=

herschallten. Ginen Augenblick feste fie fich am Fuße eines Felsen nieder. Es war Mitternacht und tiefe Stille lag auf ber Begend. Die Welsen um fie her ma= ren mit Trauerflechten bedeckt und die bleiche Schneeflechte wuchs in ben Bergspalten; hier und bort schoß aus ber schwarzen Erdrinde bie Sumpfftaube, eine fleine, blaggelbe, schwefelfarbige Blume, deren fich Die Lappen zu Zauberfünsten bedienen sollen, und welche hier den Eindruck eines unheimlichen Lächelns über biefe Tobtenfelder machte, empor. Sufanna konnte fich nicht von der Erinnerung an ihren Traum losmachen, und wohin sie ihren Blick wendete, glaubte sie bas Bild ihrer fleinen, fterbenden Schwester zu feben. Bielleicht hatte fie burch biefen Traum eine Warnung, vielleicht eine Prophezeiung erhalten, vielleicht follte fie nimmermehr aus diefer Ginobe fommen, hier fterben - und was follte bann aus ber fleinen Sulba werben? Würbe Bernachlässigung und Roth fie auf die harren Steine bes Lebens finken laffen und bie Wogen bes Elends über sie zusammenschlagen ?! In biefen traurigen Bebanken ward Susanna von Harald überrascht. Er fab, daß fie weinte und fragte mit inniger, Sufannen gum Bergen bringenber Stimme:

"Warum so ängstlich? Sind Sie traurig oder miß= vergnügt? Theilen Sie es mir offen, wie einem Freunde, mit. Ich kann es nicht ertragen, Sie so zu sehen."

"Ich habe einen bösen Traum gehabt — sagte Sussanna, ihre Thränen trocknend und aufstehend — hier ist Alles um uns her so unheimlich, so grauenhaft; das her denkt man an alles Finstere und Angstliche, was es in der Welt gibt! Aber — suhr sie munterer sort — es ist nicht der Nühe werth, daß man sich darum kümmert, es wird schon besser, wenn der Tag kommt; jetzt ist die Zeit der Finsterniß, die Stunde, in welcher die Unterirdischen herrschen." Susanna versuchte bei dies sen Worten zu lachen. — "Aber was ist das?" suhr sie sort und das Lachen verwandelte sich schnell in einen

Ausdruck von Grausen, indem sie sich unwillkührlich Harald näherte. In der Luft ließ sich ein leises Knarren und Achzen vernehmen, und in demselben Augenblick schien eine, einer grauen Wolfen ähnliche Masse über die Schneesstäche im Norden daherzugleiten, und sich dem Orte, wo sie standen, zu nähern. Im matten Mondlicht glaubte Sussanna grauenhafte Gestalten mit Hörnern und Klauen sich schaarenweise heranbewegen zu sehen und die Worte: "Die Unterirdischen" lagen ihr schon auf der Zunge.

"Es ist eine Heerde Rennthiere" — sagte Harald laschend, der ihre Gefühle zu errathen schien und der Erscheinung einige Schritte entgegenthat, indem er mechanisch an sein Gewehr faßte. In diesem Augenblicke aber schlug der Trupp eine andere Richtung ein, und jagte in wilder Eile nach Osten zu. Der Wind erhob sich stärker und ein ängstlicher Ton ging durch die Eiseinöbe.

"Das ist ja recht schauerlich!" sagte Susanna voll

Grausen.

"Aber morgen Abend — entgegnete Harald aufmun= terno - fommen wir nach ber Storlie = Senne, Die unterhalb ber Schneeregion liegt, bort finden wir bie Birkenwälder noch gang grun, bort treffen wir freund= liche Menschen an und können eine wahrhaft vortreff= liche Herberge finden. Tags barauf haben wir noch ein beschwerliches Stück Weges, aber wir bekommen babei fo großartige Scenen zu feben, bag Sie bie Mühfelig= feit gegen bas Bergnugen, bas wir haben werben, gewiß nicht in Unschlag bringen; benn bas Schone über= wiegt hier bei Weitem bas Schreckliche. Der Punft zwischen ber Storlie = und Twertie = Senne, wo die wilde Leiraelf wie rasend sich über Högfjell hinwegstürzt, und mit Blipesschnelle und Donnergefrach zwischen und über zersplitterte, theils fahle, theils malbbewachsene Felsenmaffen hindurch brauft, um mit ihrem Nebenbuhler, bem beftigen Björdjaftrom, zu fampfen - biefer Bunft übertrifft an wilber Großartigkeit Alles, was man nich benfen fann "

So sprach Harald, um Susanna's Niedergeschlagen= heit zu zerstreuen; aber sie lauschte seinen Worten halb= träumend und sagte, wie vor sich selbst hin: "Wer doch erst wohlbehalten dort wäre, und dann weiter fort, und dann —"

"Und dann? — nahm Harald die unterbrochene Rede auf — was bann?"

"Dann zu Hause bei meiner Hulba!" sagte Susanna tief aufseufzend.

"Was? Susanna! wollen Sie und benn verlassen!

Haffen Sie wirklich Norweg?"

"Nein! Nein! weit entfernt bavon! — aber man kann nicht zweien Herren dienen! das habe ich jetzt fühlen gelernt. Hulda ruft mir. Ich habe keine Ruhe, ehe ich nicht wieder in der Heimath bin, und nie will ich mich wieder von ihr trennen. Mir hat heute Nacht von ihr geträumt und sie war so bleich, so bleich! — ach! Aber Sie sind ja auch bleich, schrecklich bleich! — fuhr Susanna fort, indem sie Haralb bestürzt betrachtete — Sie sind gewiß krank!"

"Es ist wohl der liebliche Mondenschein, und diese holde Natur, welche mich so grau färben" — sagte Harald, welcher die wahre Ursache seiner Blüsse, daß nämlich seine Schulter während der Nacht schrecklich zu schmerzen begonnen hatte, verheimlichen wollte, scherzehaft, und suchte Susanna's Ausmerksamkeit auf andere

Gegenstände hinzulenken.

So waren sie, inzwischen miteinanderredend, wieder bei der Grotte angelangt. Harald schürte das verglimmende Feuer durch neues Brennholz, das er zulegte, an, und Susanna schlich leise in die Grotte, und nahm ihren früheren Platz zu den Füßen ihrer Herrin ein; aber erst spät versiel sie in einen unruhigen Schlummer.

Sie erwachte bei ben Lauten eines starken Getöses und Brausens. Ein bleicher Lichtstreif fiel in die Grotte, und sie hörte Harald draußen ganz laut sagen. "Es

ift Zeit, bag wir uns zur Reise ruften, um fo fruh als möglich in's Nachtlager zu gelangen. Wir has ben einen mühevollen Tag vor uns." Susanna sah sich nach Frau Ustrid um; diese stand bereits fertig neben ihr, und betrachtete sie mit einem

milben, beobachtenben Blide.

Susanna sprang, über ihre Saumseligkeit erschreckt, auf, und war besto flinker bei den Vorbereitungen zum Früstücke.

Man genoß wiederum von der Bouillon, und die Bauern wurden mit Lachs, Speck und in Schneewaffer

aufgelöfte Rafemolfen gefpeift.

Während dem hatte sich ein Sturm erhoben, der unseren Reisenden nichts weniger, als einen angenehmen Tag zum Reisen versprach. Der Strom und die Bäche brausten stark, und es krachte und donnerte rings umsher im Gebirge. Als der Morgen etwas weiter vorgerückt war, ließ zwar der Wind etwas nach, aber Harald warf mitunter einen bedenklichen Blick auf das graue Wolfendach, welches über ihren Häuptern sich immer schwerer zusammenzog. Susanna sah ihn einsmal einen fragenden Blick auf den Führer werfen, und diesen sein graues Haupt schütteln. Inzwischen waren die Männer alle munter, und Harald schien mit seiner bie Manner alle munter, und Saralb schien mit feiner

Lebhaftigkeit den Eindruck, den seine fortdauernde, uns gewöhnliche Blässe machte, verscheuchen zu wollen.
Den ganzen Vormittag über stieg man in der Winsterregion auswärts, und die Schneeslächen wurden immer ausgedehnter. Kein lebendes Wesen ließ sich in biefer Ginobe feben, aber man erblickte oft Rennthier= spuren, und hier und dort lagen einige Fliegen im tiefen Winterschlate auf dem Schnee. Der Wind legte sich zum Glücke mehr und mehr, und ließ nur in kurzen Stößen seinen eisigen Athemzug empfinden, aber dann und wann hörte man Knallen und Gekrach, wie von einem ftarken Donnerwetter. Es waren bie foge=

nannten "Fjellstred" oder das Stürzen großer Felsblöcke und Steine, welche sich von den Bergen losreißen und hinabstürzen, was in diesen Gebirgsgegenden gewöhnlich während und nach dem Stürmen geschieht. Die Bauern theilten mehre Geschichten von Hösen und Menschen, die von solchen Stürzen zerschmettert wurden, mit.

Der Weg ward immer beschwerlicher. Man mußte oft durch schnelssluthende Ströme waten und Schneesbrücken, unter denen die Ströme sich ihren Weg gesbahnt hatten, passiren. Harald wendete, eben so fühn als klug und voll Geistesgegenwart, oft mit eigener Gefahr alle unglücklichen Zufälle von Frau Astrid und Susannen ab. Auch war er jest nicht mehr bleich; die Anstrengung und ein, noch von Keinem geahntes Tieber machte seine Wangen im schönsten Purpur glühen.

Nachmittags kam man an den höchsten Punkt des Gebirges. Hier waren in der Nähe eines kleinen, Skiftesjö genannten, und mit einem selbst im heißesten Sommer nie schmelzenden Eise bedeckten Sees zwei große Steinhaufen aufgethürmt; hier fingen die Bäche an, nach Westen zu strömen, und der Weg, bergab-wärts zu gehen. Des Vassier's und Ishaug's Riesfengestalten, so wie andere hohe Schneeberge, zeigten

fich in ber Perspettive.

Der Wind war jetzt fast stille, aber es begann stark zu schneien, und der Wolkenhimmel senkte sich düster

und bleischwer auf die Häupter der Reisenden.

"Wir muffen eilen, eilen! — fagte der alte Hallingsbauer, indem er sich mit einem bedeutungsvollen Blicke auf den Zug, den er anführte, umwendete — sonst werden wir auf den Bergen eingeschneit, wie es beisnahe der seligen Königin Margaretha ging, als ——"Er vollendete seine Rede nicht, denn sein Pferd

Er vollendete seine Rede nicht, denn sein Pferd strauchelte plötlich an einem steilen Abhang, und stürzte zusammen. Der Kopf des alten Mannes schlug heftig

gegen einen Stein, und der Greis blieb bewußtlos lies gen. Es dauerte eine gute Weile, ehe man ihn wies der in's Leben brachte, aber der Schlag war so stark und der alte Mann war von dem Sturz so irre im Kopse, daß er nicht mehr als Führer dienen konnte. Man mußte ihn auf das Pferd setzen, welches sein Enkel ritt, und der junge, tüchtige Bursche sorgte lies bevoll für ihn.

Harald ritt jett an der Spite des Zuges, aber mit jedem Augenblick ward sein Amt schwieriger, denn der Schnee stürzte mit schrecklicher Schnelligkeit herab, und die dicke Luft hinderte Harald, die "tröstenden Wegweiser," die einzigen Rettungsmittel der Reisenden, deutlich zu unterscheiden. Man mußte oft Winkel und Umswege machen, um wieder auf das rechte Gleis zu komsmen; trotz bessen gelangte man glücklich an der Bjösröjasennerei, einer unbewohnten Sennerhütte am Ufer der breiten und reißenden Björöja, an.

Sier hielt man an, um zu berathichlagen. Die Bioroja war jest so angeschwollen, und stromte mit fol= der Gewalt, bag man bald bie vollkommene Unmog= lichkeit hier überzusetzen einfah. Der alte Sallingbauer rieth einen Umweg zu machen, ba man an einer ande= ren Stelle nahe ber Storlinsennerei und bem großen Wasserfall gleiches Namens, bessen Brausen man auf eine halbe Deile davon zu hören im Stande sei, mit Siderheit über ben Strom fegen fonne. Es war freilich ein Umweg von mehr als einer Meile, aber was follte man beginnen? Die Gefahr, Die Reise bei Diesem Unwetter fortzusegen war groß, aber noch grö= per war fie, in diefer Ginobe, wo ber Schnee nicht fel= ten mehre Ellen hoch fällt, zu bleiben. Der alte Hal-linger wählte gleichwohl bas Lettere, benn er fühlte nich unvermögend, auf bem Pferbe figen gu bleiben, und bat, man moge ibn nur in ber Gutte mit Mundvor= rath für mehre Tage laffen, nach biefer Beit, fo hoffe

er, werbe bas Schneewetter aufhören und Thau ein= treten. Er wollte nicht, daß fein Enkel bei ihm bleibe, Dieser aber bestand barauf, ben alten Großvater nicht zu verlaffen, und bie Anderen fanden bies recht und nothwendig, baber versah man bie Beiben in Gile mit bem, beffen sie in ihrer winterlichen Ginsamkeit bedürf= tig fein konnten; auch ihre Pferbe wurden mit Futter versorat, und gleichfalls mit in die Stube geführt.

Susanna verhand ben Robf bes Alten mit ber Sora= falt einer Tochter. Es fiel ihr schwer aufs Herz, daß ber Alte hier gelaffen werden follte, "und wenn nun — fragte sie — das Thauwetter nicht eintritt, und es nun gleich Winter und ber Schnee liegen bleibt, und

Du hier verschneit wirst und erfrierst?"

"Das ift schon manchem Befferen, als ich bin, wiber= fahren — antwortete ber Alte gelaffen — man kann ja boch auch nicht mehr als einmal sterben, und Gott ift selbst in der Einöde heimisch, und wer fein Bater Unser recht betet, der braucht sich auch nicht vor ben Unterirdischen zu fürchten; mit mir altem Manne mag es gehen, wie es will, meine beste Zeit ift ja jeden= falls vorbei, ich bin nur für den Burschen da be= forgt; benke an ihn, meine Tochter, wenn Du wieder zu Menschen kommst."

Sufanna war gerührt. Sie brudte einen Ruß auf Die Stirne bes Alten, und eine heiße Bahre rollte von ihren Wangen auf Die feinigen. Der Greis fah fie mit einem herzlichen, hell funkelnden Blicke an, und rief ihr, als sie die Hütte verließ, um den Anderen zu folgen, ein: Gottes Engel geleite Dich! nach.

Auf's Neue setzte fich ber kleine Zug in Bewegung, und schritt über Schneefelder, fahle Felfen und halb= aufgethaute Morafte. Der Schnee ging ben Pferben bis boch an die Beine, und fie schritten nur träg und fast widerstrebend weiter. Es ward immer dusterer und bufterer. Miemand fprach ein Wort. Go zog man eine Stunde lang weiter.

Sufanna hatte ichon feit einer geraumen Weile mit großer Unruhe zu bemerken geglaubt, baß Saralb im Sattel mante; fie suchte fich aber felbst zu überreben, baß es eine, burch ben ungleichen Schritt bes Pferbes, und ben bichten Schneenebel, burch welchen fie ibn fah, verursachte Täuschung sei. Alles um sie her hatte ja ein verwirrendes Aussehen, und erschien schwebend und gespenstig. Ein dumpfer Schrei der Obristin unter= brach die unheimliche Stille und — war das auch Täuschung? Harald's Pferd ftand, reiterlos, ftill. Ach leider! war bies nur allzuwirklich! Harald war, von einem Schwindel befallen, neben sein Pferd ge-stürzt. Lange hatte er schweigend die zunehmenden Schmerzen in Bruft und Schulter ertragen, und vor fich, fo wie vor den Anderen, das Gefühl eines Fieber= schwindels, das seinen Ropf benahm, zu verheimlichen. Auch jett, da es ihn übermannte, wollte er nicht zu= geben, bag es von Bedeutung fei. Mit Behülfe bes Anechts machte er mehre Versuche, sich wieder zu Pferde zu feten, aber vergebens! Er konnte fein fieberwildes . Haupt nicht mehr heben. Im Schnee knieend und mit ftummer Erbitterung lebnte er feine brennenbe Stirne gegen ein Felsstück.

"Hier also, hier sollen wir sterben! — sagte Frau Astrid halblaut mit dumpser Stimme vor sich hin und diese jungen Leute werden durch meine Schuld hin=

geopfert! Dein Geschick bleibt fich gleich! -"

Es war ein Augenblick fürchterlicher Stille. Mensichen und Thiere standen unbeweglich und wie versteisnert, während der Schnee auf sie hernieder siel und sie hier zu begraben drohte.

Jest aber erhob fich eine helle lebhafte Stimme:

"Ich sehe da dort eine vorspringende Bergplatte, die uns Schutz gegen den Schnee gewähren wird. Wir mussen ihn dorthin schaffen!" — Susanna hob Harald auf und nahm seinen Arm, indem sie den Knecht vor= idusen.

angehen und einen Weg durch den Schnee bahnen hieß. Ungefähr vierzig Schritte von der Stelle, wo sie stand, sprang wirklich eine gewölbte Felsplatte über den Boden hervor, unter ihr konnte man sich vor dem Schnee, der sich wie ein Wall um die offene Seite her thürmte,

"Stützen Sie sich auf mich! Stärker! stärker! fürchten Sie nichts, ich bin stark!" — sagte Susanna, indem sie Harald mit weichen aber kräftigen Armen umfaßte. Er ließ sich führen, wie ein Kind; er war sich seiner nicht ganz klar bewußt, dennoch empfand er ein gewisses Wergnügen, sich der Führung des jungen Mädchens, die ihm mit so milder und doch muthiger Stimme zusprach, zu überlassen.

Farald ward so bequem als möglich unter die schüzzende Steinplatte gelegt; Susanna nahm den Shawl, den sie unter ihrem Pelze trug, ab, und machte ihm ein weiches Kopffissen daraus. "Ach, das that gut!" sagte er leise und drückte ihre Hand, indem er fühlte, daß diese Lage ihm Linderung verschaffte. Susanna

fehrte barauf zu ihrer Herrin zurud.

"Susanna — sagte diese — ich möchte auch gerne dahin, es sieht so aus, als ob man dort bequem aus= ruhen könne, aber ich bin so erstarrt, daß ich mich kaum rühren kann."

Susanna hob ihre Gebieterin vom Pferde, und von ihr geführt und gestütt, gelangte Frau Aftrid unter das

schützende Dach.

Hier war eine, im Vergleich mit dem offenen Felde fast lauwarme Temperatur, denn die Bergwand und die Schneewälle hinderten den kalten Wind, einzudrins gen. Hier sette Susanna ihre von Kälte und Müdigsteit fast erstarrte Herrin nieder.

Susanna war gleichfalls durchgefroren und mude, aber welch einen Suden von Leben und Wärme ver= mögen Liebe und fester Wille nicht bei einem Menschen bervorzurufen! Die Kräfte biefer Gefühle trieben jest bie Bulje bes jungen Dlabchens und machten bas Blut beiß aus ben Bergkammern bis in ihre Fingerspipen ftromen. Gie rieb bie erftarrten Glieber ihrer Berrin, wärmte sie mit Kuffen und Thränen an ihrem pochen= ben Bufen. Sie vermochte fie, einen Schluck Wein zu trinfen und bereitete auch für Saralb's trodine und bur= stende Lippen einen wohlthätigen Labetrunk aus Wein und Wasser. Ihr mit Schnee befeuchtetes Taschentuch legte sie um seine schmerzende Stirne. Um Beide legte fie Mantel und Kleiber, fo bag fie vor ber Ralte ge= schützt waren. Dann stand sie eine Zeit lang schwei= gend mit icharfem und ernftem Blicke ba. Sie bachte, was weiter zu thun war, um diese beide zu retten. Harald hatte sich auf dem gesunden Arme erhoben

und fah ftill mit bem Schmerze, ben eine mannliche Natur empfindet, wenn sie gezwungen wird, einer ih= rer ebelften Reigungen zu entfagen, eine Stute und Bulfe ber ihrer Dbhut anvertrauten Schwachen zu fein, vor sich nieder. Eine Thräne, die erste, welche Sufanna ihn weinen sah, rann seine Wangen hernieder.

Frau Aftrid fah bufteren Blices zu bem grabahn=

lichen Gewölbe empor.

Susanna's Augen aber funkelten immer heller und klarer. "Bört! hört!" fagte sie und lauschte.

Frau Aftrid und Barald hefteten fragende Blide

auf fie.

"Ich höre ein Geräusch — fagte Susanna — wie

bas eines großen Wafferfalls."

"Das ift bas Raufden bes Storlie-Bafferfalls rief Harald auf einen Augenblick neubelebt, aus — aber was hilft das uns? — fuhr er fort und fank muthlos zurud - wir find eine halbe Meile bavon entfernt und fonnen nicht babin fommen."

"Ja, wir fonnen, wir werben es! - fagte Sujanna mit fester Ueberzeugung. - Muth! Muth! meine theure

Streit u. Frieden. L.

gnädige Frau! sein Sie unbesorgt, herr Bergmann! wir werden bahin fommen, wir werden gerettet werben."

"Und wie bas? — fagte Harald — ber Knecht ist ein Dummkopf, ber findet sich in seinem Leben nicht bin! -- "

"Aber ich werbe hinfinden, barauf konnen Sie rech= nen! - rief Sufanna aus - und mit Menschen und Bulfe zuruckkommen. Sagen Sie mir nur die Renn= zeichen bes rechten Weges, bie Gie fennen; biefe unb bas Getofe bes Storlie-Giegbachs werben mich leiten."

"Es ift umsonst! Sie wurden einsam in ber Ralte

und im Schneegestöber umtommen."

"Ich werde nicht umkommen! ich bin ftark! Niemand foll mich hindern, und wenn Sie mir den Weg nicht fagen wollen, so suche ich ihn dennoch." Alls Harald ihren Entschluß so feststehen sah, und

ihr begeisterter Ton ihm eine Art Buversicht einflößte, suchte er ihr die Gegenstände, nach welchen fie fich rich= ten sollte und welche in Bergen und Felsen, welche gleichwohl die schneedicke Nacht ihr nicht zu unterschei= ben geftatten wurde, bestanden.

Mit tiefer Aufmerksamkeit lauschte Susanna und fagte dann lebhaft: "Jett habe ich es! ich werde den Weg finden! Gott behüte Sie! bald werde ich mit Hülfe

hier fein! - "

Als sie in's Freie hinauskam, fand sie ben Knecht, feinen Troft in einem Branntweinsfruge suchend, und Die Pferde in muthlose Betänbung versunken. Sie forderte ihn auf, für die Thiere zu forgen, und er= mahnte ihn fraftig, unter Drohungen und Beripre= dungen von Belohnung, an feine Herrichaft zu benten und für beren Sicherheit zu machen. Sie felbft gab ihrem Pferde Futter und Wasser, schmeichelte ihm bis= weilen und redete ihm freundlich und ermunternd zu. Dann schwang fie fich hinauf, um ihren einsamen, gefähr= lichen Ritt zu beginnen; aber mit großer Schwierigkeit

brachte sie das Pferd dazu, sich von seinen Genossen zu trennen, und als es einige zwanzig Schritte vorwärts gemacht hatte, blieb es stehen und wollte zu den anderen Pferden umkehren. Dieses Manöver wiederholte sich mehre Male, zulet wirkten weder Schläge noch Zurezden, es wollte nicht mehr gehorchen; Susanna stieg ab und ließ das Pferd laufen; einige Thränen drängten sich in ihre Augen, als sie sah, wie jenes sie verließ, und bittend erhob sie ihre Hände zu Dem, der allein hier das einsame, wehrlose Mädchen sah.

Hierauf feste fie ben Weg zu Tug weiter fort.

So lang war der Weg wohl gerade nicht und nicht in der Weite desselben bestand die Schwierigkeit; aber wer Susanna sich unter dem tiesen Schnee hervor arbeiten, über Felsen klimmen, durch Moraste, in denen sie bei jedem Schritt befürchten mußte, zu versinken, wandern sah, der hätte sich gewiß über ihren Muth, ihre Kraft gewundert. Aber "Gottes Engel," den der Breis auf sie als ihren Führer herabgerusen hatte, schien auf dem Wege mit ihr zu sein, denn der Schnee siel nicht mehr so stark, und von Zeit zu Zeit zuckte ein Mondstrahl durch's Gewölf und zeigte ihr irgend einen, der von Harald als den Weg bezeichnend, genannten Gegenstände; überdem tönte das zunehmende Brüllen des Storliesturzes wie die Posaunen des jüngsten Lages in ihren Ohren. Ein fester Wille, das Ausserste zu versuchen, eine heimliche Freude darüber, daß sie ihre Liebe, wenn auch mit Verlust ihres Lebens, besweisen könne, bestügelte ihre Schritte und ließ ihren Muth auch nicht auf einen Augenblick sinken.

So verstossen zwei Stunden. Jett hörte Susanna das Wasser unter ihren Füßen brausen. Sie glaubte dem Sturze in einen Abgrund nahe zu sein; ringsum war Alles Nacht und Schnee. Sie blieb stehen; es war ein Augenblick schrecklicher Ungewißheit. Da theilzten sich die Wolken und ließen den Halmond in vollem

Glanz, gerade als er hinter einem Berge untergehen wollte, hervorstrahlen; Susanna sah jetzt den Abgrund, an dessen Nande sie stand, sie sah des Storlie-Stürz-bachs breiten Wasserschwall im Mondenscheine glänzen und erblickte die Sennerhütten drunten! —

Unter dem Steingewölbe, wo sich Frau Aftrid und Harald befanden, herrschte eine Weile nach Susannens Entfernung eine tiefe, grauenhafte Stille, welche endlich von der Obristin unterbrochen wurde; diese sagte in feierlichem Tone:

"Ich habe eine Bitte an Sie, Haralb!"

"Befehlen Sie über mich — antwortete dieser — o

fonnte ich boch Ihre Wünsche erfüllen!"

"Wir scheinen Beide — hob Frau Aftrid an — jett dem Tode nahe zu sein, aber Sie sind jünger und stärker als ich, Sie werden, hoffe ich, gerettet werden. Ich muß Ihnen, Harald, einen wichtigen Auftrag ansvertrauen, und ich verlasse mich auf das Chrgefühl und die Gesinnung, welche ich in Ihnen gesunden habe, daß Sie denselben gewissenhaft ausführen, im Fall ich außer Stande bin, es zu thun, und Sie, wie ich glausben will, mich überleben."

Die Obristin hatte diese Worte mit fester Stimme geredet, aber während der folgenden Erzählung bebte sie oft vor abwechselnden Gemüthsbewegungen. Sie sprach schnell und in kurzen, abgebrochenen Phrasen:

"Ich habe eine Schwester gehabt. Wie ich sie liebte, kann ich nicht sagen. So ernst mein Charakter war, so heiter und mild war der ihrige. Alls ich mich verheirathete, kam sie zu mir in's Haus. Aber da war kein Glück. Das Vermögen, welches sie besaß, setze sie in den Stand, der Neigung ihres Herzens zu folgen, und sie reichte ihre Hand einem unbemittelten, aber lies benswürdigen jungen Manne, einem Lieutenant Wolf,

und lebte mit ihm mehre Monate in der größten irdischen Glückseligkeit, die aber nur kurze Zeit währen sollte. Wolf kam bei einer Seeerpedition um, und seine unglückliche Gattin überwältigte der Gram um ihren Verlust. Sie starb wenige Stunden, nachdem sie einem Knaben das Leben geschenkt, das zarte Kind in meine Urme gelegt und mich seierlich beschworen hatte, dem

Rleinen eine Mutter zu fein. "Und ich warb biesem Rinbe eine Mutter; ein eige= ner Sohn hatte mir nicht theurer sein können, als die-fer Knabe. Ich war auf das schöne, lebhafte Kind stolz und fah in ihm eine heiterere Zukunft. Er sollte bie Ibeale meiner Jugend verwirklichen, er follte — o Gott! In meinem armen, leeren Leben war ich noch reich burch ben Anaben; aber ber Mann, ber meine Sand erhalten hatte, bulbete nicht, daß mein Berz so ganz dem Klei= nen angehörte. Er faßte gegen den armen Knaben einen Groll und mein Leben ward mir noch mehr verbittert, als zuvor. Einstmals wollte ich zu einer franken Ber= wandten fahren und ben fiebenjährigen , Anaben mit mir nehmen, denn er war noch nie von mir getrennt gemesen; aber mein Mann wollte ihn zurudbehalten und nahm zu ben Tonen ber Liebe feine Buflucht, um mich dazu zu überreden; diesen Tonen konnte ich nicht widerstehen, und ungeachtet der Bitten des Kleinen und einer mir ahnungsichwer scheinenben Angst, ließ ich mein armes Rind zurud; ich glaubte ftark zu handeln, und war boch nur schwach. Ich hatte ber Mutter bes Knaben geschworen, ihn zu schützen, ich mußte, daß ich ihn in rauhen, feindlichen Sänden zuruckließ, und bennoch! - Alls ich nach einer Woche von meiner Reise zuruck= fam, war ber Anabe - verschwunden. Er war eines Tages, so hieß es, ausgegangen und seitdem nicht wie-der gekommen. Man hatte überall nach ihm gesucht und endlich seinen kleinen Hut auf einer Klippe am Meeresstrand gefunden — man sah es für wahrscheinlich an, bag er ba hinabgestürzt sei. Ich fand meinen Mann bamit beschäftigt, fich bes Erbes meiner Schwe= fter, welches in Gemäßheit ihres Testaments, im Falle der Knabe sterben sollte, uns zufallen sollte, zu bemäch= tigen. Von biefer Stunde mard meine Seele von einem schrecklichen Argwohn eingenommen! — Gott sei gelobt, daß er sich als ungerecht bewies! Gott verzeihe mir, daß ich ihn je gehegt habe! — Zwanzig Jahre hindurch hat er an meinem Gemuthe gezehrt; zwanzig Jahre lang hat er Bleigewicht an die Erfüllung meiner Pflichten gehängt. Alle meine Nachforschungen waren vergeblich; Niemand konnte beargwohnt werden, Niemand Anderes, als ein feindliches Schicksal schien hierbei thä= tig gewesen zn fein. Es blieb babei, ber Knabe hatte Erlaubnig erhalten ausgeben und fpielen zu burfen, er hatte ohne Begleitung bas Saus verlaffen, und Rie=

mand hatte ihn feitbem gesehen.

"Zwanzig Jahre — lange, buftere Jahre find feitdem verflossen und die Hoffnung war nach und nach in mei= nem Berzen erstorben, die schwache Hoffnung, welche mitunter in demselben auflebte, daß ich noch mein ge-liebtes Kind wiederfinden würde. Mein Mann starb, nachdem er mehre Jahre lang feiner Körper = und See= lenfräfte in Folge eines Schlagfluffes beraubt gewesen war. Ich ward frei, aber warum sollte ich leben ?! Ich hatte ben Glauben an Alles, was und bas Leben theuer macht, verloren und stand einsam an der Schwelle bes Alters, nur von finfteren und bitteren Erinnerungen umgeben. So fühlte ich noch vor wenigen Tagen, als ich ein Schreiben vom jetigen Kommandanten von R. erhielt, in welchem ein unversiegelter Brief, ben man, wie er schrieb, in einer Lade, in die mein Mann alte Briefe und werthlose Papiere zu werfen pflegte, gefun= den hatte, lag. Und dieser Brief — wie hat er nicht mein Berg und meine Zukunft verwandelt! Diefer Brief war von meinem Gatten, offenbar gleich nach seinem

ichweren Schlaganfall verfaßt, und die mit unsicherer Sand geschriebenen Worte fagen mir, daß bas verlorene Rind noch lebt, und verweisen mich, wegen bes Näheren an einen gewiffen Unteroffizier Ronn in Bergen; ber Brief scheint bei biesen Worten, in Folge eines plötlichen Übelbefindens, abgebrochen zu fein. Ich war zufällig an biesem Tage nicht zu Sause gewesen; als ich zurückkehrte, fand ich meinen Mann sprach = und fast leblos. In Folge eifriger Bemühungen rief man ihn zwar in's Leben zurud, aber bas Bemußtfein blieb bunkel und ber halbe Körper gelähmt - fo lebte er noch mehre Jahre hindurch. In einem lichten Augen= blicke, furz vor seinem Tode, wollte er mir, bavon bin ich überzeugt, bas ben Knaben Berreffende, ober bas Worhandensein bes erwähnten Briefes fund thun, aber ber Tod hinderte ihn davon. Wie dieser Brief unter Die alten Papiere geworfen worden ift, begreife ich nicht; vielleicht that mein Dann es felbft, während ber Bei= stesverwirrung, in welcher er ben Brief schloß - genug, bie Sand ber Vorsehung bewahrte bas Schreiben vor bem Bernichtetwerben und gab es in meine Sanbe.

"Jett wissen Sie die Veranlassung zu meinem schnelzlen Abreisen; und wenn diese Reise für mich hier zu Ende sein, wenn ich nie meines Lebens höchsten Wunsch und letzte Hoffnung erfüllt sehen, und wenn ich nie meiner Schwester Sohn wieder und das ihm mit Unzrecht Entzogene in seinen Händen erblickten sollte, so erhören Sie meine Vitte, meine seierliche Aussorderung, und suchen Sie, wenn Sie können, in Vergen den obenz genannten Mann, dessen Abresse Sie in diesem Papiere sinden werden, auf; sagen Sie ihm, daß ich Sie in meiner letzten Stunde bevollmächtigt habe, an meiner Statt zu handeln, sparen Sie sein Geld, wenn es sein muß, versprechen, drohen Sie — nur erforschen Sie, wo sich meiner Schwester Sohn befindet; und dann — gehen Sie zu ihm, bringen Sie ihm meinen letzten, liebevol=

len Gruß; geben Sie ihm dies hier — es ist mein Testament, es wird ihn in den Besitz alles dessen, was mir gehört und eigentlich das Vermögen seiner Mutter ist, denn das Meinige ist sast ganz zerrüttet, setzen. Sasgen Sie ihm, daß der Gram um ihn mein Leben aufgezehrt hat, bitten Sie ihn, meiner liebend zu gedenken, bitten Sie ihn — aber mein Gott? was thun Sie? warum sassen Sie meine Hand so — Sie weinen? —"

"Sagen Sie nur — stammelte Harald, mit einer von Gemüthsbewegung fast erstickten Stimme — trug dies Kind ein kleines, eisernes Kreuz mit einem geslügelten Cherubskopf in der Mitte an einem Bande um den

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"Ich nahm bas Kreuz von ber Bruft seiner Mutter

und hing es an bie seinige."

"Und hier — hier ruht es noch! — rief Harald, indem er in Frau Aftrid's Hand das kleine, an seinem Halse hangende, Kreuz gab. — Welche Erinnerungen tauchen jetzt in mir auf! — Ja, es muß wohl so sein! Ich kann nicht zweiseln — Sie sind die erste Pflegerin meiner Kinderjahre, Sie sind die Schwester meiner Mutter! —"

Ein Ruf unbeschreiblicher Erschütterung unterbrach

Sarald : "Guter Gott! Sie maren !? - "

"Ihrer Schwester Sohn, das Kind, welches Sie beflagt haben. Jetzt erinnere ich mich erst meiner selbst und Ihrer!"

"Und ich — Ihre Stimme; Harald! kam mir oft wundersam bekannt vor; jett — jett glaube ich Ihres Vaters Stimme wiederzuerkennen. Neden, reden Sie, um Gottes willen, erklären Sie mir, geben Sie mir Gewißheit! Sie geben mir mehr, als das Leben!"

"Was soll ich sagen? — fuhr Harald in großer Spannung und Unruhe fort — mir selbst ist Bieles unklar, unbegreislich; aber Ihre Erzählung hat Erin= nerungen, Eindrücke in mir erweckt, welche mir mit

Bewißheit funben, bag ich weber Sie noch mich betruge. Ich entsinne mich jetzt ganz vollkommen flar, daß ich als Kind eines Tages einen Hügel außerhalb der Fe= stung im Sanbschlitten hinabfuhr, und wie ich bort von dem mir befannten Sergeanten Rönn (dessen Na= men mir aber bis jett eben, gänzlich entfallen war), angeredet und eingeladen wurde eine Lustfahrt mit ihm in seinem Schlitten zu machen. Mit der größten Bereitwilligkeit stieg ich ein. Ich erinnere mich jetzt auch
ganz gut, daß mir mein Hut dabei vom Winde fortgerissen wurde, daß ich ihn wiederholen wollte, vom
Sergeanten aber, der mir einen Mantel umwarf, und in wildem Jagen bavonfuhr, baran verhindert wurde. Diese Spaziersahrt dauerte lang — aber von da an wurden meine Frinnerungen dunkel, und ich blicke in jene Zeit, wie in eine finstere Nacht, die nur dann und wann ein Blit auf Augenblicke erhellt, zurück. Wahr= scheinlich verfiel ich damals in die schwere Krankheit, welche noch lange nachher meiner Entwickelung hinder= lich war. Wie auf einen Traum befinne ich mich noch darauf, daß ich nach Hause zu meiner Mutter wollte, daß mein Schreien vom Unteroffizier erst mit guten Worten und dann mit Drohungen zur Ruhe gebracht wurde. Ganz dunkel schwebt es mir noch vor, daß ich mich eine Zeitlang in einem efelhaften unwohnlichen Sause befand, wo mir häßliche Menschen mit Barte be= gegneten, und daß ich mich nach dem Tode sehnte. — Dann aber kommt wie Sonnenschein, die Erinnerung an ein anderes Saus, einen klaren himmel, reine Luft, grüne Wiesen, und an freundliche, milbe Menschen, welche mit unendlicher Theilnahme um mich frankes, schwaches Kind bemüht waren. Dies war das Haus Allettes und ihrer trefflichen Aeltern, die mich, nachdem ich von ihnen in's Leben zurückgerufen worden war, als Sohn annahmen. Meine neuen Verhältniffe wur= ben mir unendlich lieb, ich fühlte mich glücklich, mein

Siechthum und die lang darauffolgende Schwäche hatz ten beinabe ganz und gar die Erinnerung an das Verz gangene verwischt; ich hatte Menschen=und Ortsnamen vergessen, nicht so meiner Jugendzeit erste, mütterliche Pflegerin. Wie ein schönes, heiliges Bild geleitete sie mich durch das ganze Leben, obgleich sie sich im Lauf der Jahre gleichsam in immer dichtere Schleier hüllte.

"Alls ich älter geworden war, begehrte und erhielt ich von meinem Pflegevater eine Aufflärung über meine Aufnahme in fein Saus. Ich erfuhr, baß er eines Tages herrn R. in Christiansand in Geschäftsangele= genheiten besucht, und bei biesem ein außerft schwach= liches, blaffes Kind im Sonnenschein auf bem Boben fitend gesehen hatte. Das Rind fing an zu weinen, ward aber burch Schreck, ba Herr R. es anschrie, und ihm mit ber bunklen Kammer brohte, zum Schweigen gebracht. Ueber bies Berfahren emport, fragte mein Wohlthäter, wem der Knabe zugehöre? und erhielt zur Antwort, daß er ein armes Kind, ohne Angehörige, aus Barmherzigkeit aufgenommen und unter R's Obhut gestellt worden sei. Alettes Bater beschloß auf ber Stelle, foste es, mas es wolle, bas Rind aus biefer Pflege zu nehmen, und erbot sich, ben Knaben zu sich zu nehmen, um bie Wirkung ber Landluft auf beffen Gesundheit zu erproben. So fam ich in biefe Familie, welche ich nachher die meinige nannte. Aufschluffe über meine Aeltern und über mein wahres Berhältniß gu Berrn R., fonnte ich nicht erhalten. R. ftarb einige Wochen nachbem ich fein Saus verlaffen hatte, und feine Gattin war ober ftellte fich in Allem, was mich betraf, ganzlich unwiffend.

"Aber meine vortrefflichen Pflegeältern ließen mich nie eigene Angehörige vermissen; sie machten keinen Unterschied zwischen mir und ihrem eigenen Kinde, und Alette ward für mich die zärtlichste, beste Schwester. Der Tod raubte uns die geliebten Stüten; denn nach

zwei Jahren starb Alette's Bater; Alette zog zu nahen Unverwandten, und gab bald barauf ihre hand einem Mann, den sie schon lange geliebt hatte, als Braut; und ich wollte auf Reisen das Gefühl ber Einsamkeit, welches meine Seele beschlichen hatte, zerstreuen. Um Diese Zeit führte mich ber Zufall, ober beffer gefagt, Die Vorsehung zu Ihnen. Bewunderung und ein Interesse, bessen Macht ich nicht schilbern kann, zog mich zu Ihnen; vielleicht wirfte, mir unbewußt, Die bunkle, holde Erinnerung aus meiner Kindheit Tagen, welche jest flar vor meinen Geiste aufgestiegen ift. Ich glaubte mich wieder in die Knabenjahre wo ich Sie Mutter nannte, und Sie bis zur Vergötterung liebte, verfest, und jett - bei biesen Worten erfaßte Sarald mit leibenschaftlicher Bartlichkeit Frau Aftrid's Sande und stammelte: — und jett — was fagt Ihr Herz? — können Sie seinen dunklen Erinnerungen, dieser, aller Beweise mangelnden Erzählung glauben? — Darf ich Sie wieder Mutter nennen? Können, wollen Sie mich als Ihren Sohn aufnehmen? —"

"Ob ich es will? — Sieh diese Freudenthränen! ich habe beren nicht viele auf Erden vergossen! Ich kann nicht zweifeln — ich glaube — ich bin glücklich. Du bift ber Sohn meiner Schwester, bift mein Rind - ich habe Dich wieder. Aber ach! habe ich Dich nur wiedergefunden, um Dich fterben, burch meine Schuld sterben zu sehen? Bin ich benn zu Deinem Unglück geboren? Das ist eine bittere Stunde."

"Aber auch eine schöne! rief Saralb mit Warme, wir haben einander wiedergefunden! wir find ver= eint. --"

"Um zu fterben!"

"Noch ist Rettung möglich!"

"Nur durch ein Wunder!"

"Die Vorsehung läßt wunderbarere Dinge geschehen; wir haben ja erft unlängst einen Beweis bavon gehabt" - fagte Sarald mit fanftem Vorwurfe.

"Du haft Recht, Harald! aber ich bin fo unglücklich gewesen! es wird mir so schwer, an gludbringende Wun= ber zu glauben! aber jedenfalls fei Gott für biefe Stunde

gepriesen, und sein Wille geschehe!"

"Er geschehe," wiederholte Sarald leise, aber mit männlicher Fassung. — Beide schwiegen ermattet; Alles um sie her lag in tiefem Dunkel, benn ber Mond war untergegangen, und der Schnee siel dicht. Sie glaub= ten lebendig begraben zu fein.

Aber bas Wunder ber Rettung war boch nahe. Licht schimmerte, und braugen in ber Schneeeinobe liegen fich

Stimmen boren.

"Susanna! — riefen Frau Aftrid und Harald zu gleicher Zeit — Susanna, unser Rettungsengel!"

Und es war Susanna, die, mit einer brennenden Fa= del in ber Sand, in bas buftere Gewölbe, welches plot= lich wie Millionen Diamanten funkelte, fturzte; einige

dieser Diamanten schimmerten in Menschenaugen. "Sie sind gerettet, Gott sei gelobt! — rief Susanna — hier sind gute, kräftige Menschen, die uns helfen werden; aber wir muffen eilen, ber Schnee fällt bicht."

Mehre Bauern mit Fackeln und zwei Tragbahren erscheinen jett; Frau Aftrid und Harald wurden Beide, jeber auf eine berfelben gelegt, und mit weichen Schafs= fellen bebeckt.

"Sufanna — fagte Frau Aftrib — fomm hieher, und rube an meiner Seite aus."

"Nein! — antwortete biefe, und hob ihre Fackel em= por — ich will vorangehen und leuchten. Fürchten Sie nicht für mich. Ich bin flark! —" Aber eine seltsame Empsindung durchschauerte sie, als ob ihr Herz schwach würde, und ihre Kniee bra=

chen unter ihr zusammen.

Noch eine kurze Weile stand sie aufrecht, und that einen Schritt, um vorwärts zu geben, bann fühlte fie ihre Bruft fich gleichsam zusammenschnuren. Sie sank in die Aniee, und die Fackel entfiel ihrer Hand. Hulda!
— flüsterte es in ihr — mein kleiner Liebling! Lebe wohl! —

"Susanna! Großer Gott!" riefen zwei Stimmen zusgleich, und von Schreck und Furcht erkräftigt, sprangen Frau Astrib und Haralb auf, und umfaßten Susanna.

Sie sank immer mehr und mehr zusammen, faßte ih= rer Herrin und Haralds Hände, und sagte mit großer Anstrengung, innig slehend:

"Meine kleine Sulba! — Die Baterlose — Die Mut=

terlose - benft an fie! -"

"Susanna, mein gutes, liebes Kind! rief Frau Aftrid
— Du wirst, Du kannst jett nicht sterben!" — und zum ersten Male siel ein Strahl besorgter Liebe aus ihren dunklen Augen auf das junge, treue Mädchen.

Es war auch das erste Mal, daß Sufanna sich ei= eines solchen Blicks erfreute, und sie blickte so froh

empor, als schaute fie in ben geöffneten Simmel.

"D Harald! — sagte sie barauf, indem sie ihn mit unsäglicher Innigkeit und Klarheit anblickte — ich weiß, ich konnte Sie im Leben nicht glücklich machen, aber — ich banke Gott bafür, daß ich für Sie sterben kann. Jett — jett verschmähen Sie meine Liebe nicht" — und dabei faßte sie seine und ihrer Herrin Hände, drückte sie an ihre Brust, und sagte mit brechender Stimme:

"Berzeiht mir meine Fehler — um meiner Liebe willen!"

Ein leichter zuckender Schauer durchflog ihren Kör= per, ihr Haupt sank auf die Brust nieder. Susanna ward ohne Lebenszeichen neben ihre Herringelegt, welche sie in ihren Armen hielt, und das junge, erblaßte Ant= litz mit Thränen badete.

see of enfath and their

20.

Das Erwachen.

Und ich erwachte, als das Leben slegte, Nachdem in Dhnmacht sich mein Dasein schmiegte, Die Theure sah ich da an meinem Lager.

Rein

Monate vergingen und bas Leben war für Sufanna nur ein wilder, unruhiger Traum. In den Phantasieen des Fieberwahnes durchlebte sie die Eindrücke der Ge= birgsreise nochmals aber in dunkleren Farben. Sie fah Die Unterirdischen in schrecklichen Gestalten auf ber Schneemufte umbertoben, fie unter Schnee = und Gishugeln, welche sie über sie warfen, ersticken wollend. Susjanna kämpste mit verzweifelter Anstrengung gegen sie, denn sie wußte, daß wenn sie fiele, auch die Schutzwehr für die Menschen, welche sie liebte, sinken würde und Die Unterirbischen bann Gewalt über Dieselben befämen; und jeden Schneeklumpen, ben bie Zaubergestalten auf ste warfen, schleuberte sie auf dieselben zurück. Endlich begehrten die Unterirdischen zu unterhandeln und verssprachen ihr, daß, wenn sie gutwillig mit ihnen kommen würde, ihre Freunde von ihnen in Ruhe gelassen, ja sogar mit Gluck und Reichthum bedacht werden sollten. Mun' hörte Sufanna auf zu kampfen, und ließ sich unter Thränen über ben schönen Simmel und die Erbe mit ben grünen Thälern und geliebten Menschen, bie ste nie mehr sehen sollte, schweigend von den Spuksgestalten in die unterirdische Wohnung, wo sie unsäg= liche Qualen erbulbete, hinabziehen. Doch war fie froh und zufrieden, für die, welche fie liebte, gu leiden, und aus der finsteren, kalten Tiefe, in der zu weilen sie ver= urtheilt war; sandte sie die liebevollsten, rührendsten Abschiedsworte an ihre Sulda, ihre Herrin, Harald und

Alette empor, und verrieth fo, ohne es zu wiffen, ihres

Bergens geheime Rampfe und Qualen.

Eines Tages glaubte fie, bereits hundert Jahre bie Welt der Unterirdischen bewohnt zu haben, fie befand sich jetzt in deren Kirche, denn ihre Zeit war um, sie follte fterben, und im Tobe (bas mußte fie) wurde fie von der Macht ber Berggeifter befreit werben Sie fonnte aber feine Freude barüber empfinden, fo matt war ihr Herz, so kalt ihre Bruft. Sie lag auf einen Steinboben ausgestreckt und über sie hin wölbte sich ein Dach aus Gis - es war ihr Grabgewölbe - und bier sollte fie fterben. Nach und nach beschlich eine Betäubung alle ihre Gebanken und Empfindungen, alle Qualen wichen, und über fie fam ein tiefer, aber lieber und linder Schlaf, und Susanna, welche bennoch ihr Bewußtsein dabei behielt, glaubte, der Tod sei eine fanfte Rube, und wünschte nicht zu erwachen. Plötlich fam es ihr aber vor, als öffne fich bie Pforte bes Grabgewölbes und fie fah einen bem Sonnenlichte ahn= lichen Schein — es nahre ihr Jemand und berührte ihre Lippen mit einer Flamme — einer Flamme, wie-die des Lebens; da schlug ihr Herz rascher, das Blut ftromte warm burch ihre Abern, - fie fah auf und erblickte eine weibliche Gestalt, welche fich mit einem Blide voll Liebe und Mitleidens über fie beugte, zu Bäupten an ihrem Bette fteben. Den Blick, ben icho= nen, Leben einflößenden Blick, glaubte Susanna schon einmal vordem gesehen zu haben, und je länger sie Dies Antlit anblickte, besto mehr glaubte sie bekannte Buge, die eblen geliebten Züge ihrer Gerrin wiederzu= fennen, diese sah aber schöner und junger aus, als fru= jer; zu ihren Fußen fah sie wilde Rosen stehen, auf velche bie Sonne schien; Alles fam ihr so lieblich, so vunderbar vor, daß fie unwillführlich flufterte:

"Sind wir jest im himmel?"

[&]quot;Noch auf Erden! — antwortete eine Stimme voll

Bärtlichkeit. — Du sollst bort noch für bie, welche Dich lieben, leben."

"Ach! wer liebt mich?" fragte Sufanna schwach und

verzagt.

"Ich — antwortete die Stimme — ich und noch Mehre; sei aber ruhig und still — eine Mutter wacht über Dir!"

Und Susanna blieb ruhig und still, und überließ sich bei ihrer großen Schwäche mit dankbarer Hingebung der mütterlichen Wärterin. Frau Astrids Gegenwart, ja nur der Laut ihrer leisen Schritte, nur der Anblick ihres Schattens flößten Susannen wohlthuende Empfindungen ein, Alles was sie aus Iener Hände nahm, war ihr angenehm und gesund; es entspann sich zwischen Beiden ein liebevolles Verhältnis. Frau Astrid, welche das junge Mädchen unter ihren Händen gleichsam neugeboren werden sah, faßte eine große Neigung zu ihr, welche sie selbst überraschte und beglückte. Die kräftige, gesunde Susanna war ihr zu fern gestanden, die schwache, und in ihrer Schwachheit so kindlich liebende, schlich sich in ihr Herz, welches sie dadurch gleichsam von Neuem aufblühen fühlte.

Dies ist die Wirkung aller wahren Hingebung jeder reinen Liebe, und zwar in jedem Lebensalter, denn die Liebe ist der Sommer des Herzens und des Lebens.

Sobald Kräfte und klares Gedächtniß wiederum bei Susannen erwachten, verlangte sie das Schicksal aller Derer, welche die Gebirgsreise mitgemacht hatten, zu wissen. Mit Verwunderung und Freude hörte sie, wie Frau Aftrid in Harald ihren Nessen wiedergefunden hatte, und dadurch das Dunkel aus ihrem Leben entwichen war.

Durch den Unterofficier Könn und die durch seine Aussagen veranlaßten Nachforschungen hatte man bald die vollkommenste Gewißheit in Harald's Jugenderhält= nissen erlangt. Man erfuhr, daß Herr K. ein Ver=

trauter bes Oberften Hjelm gewesen war, und einen so gemeinen Charafter gehabt hatte, für Geld in die Plane bes Oberften einzugehen und Harald aufzuneh= men, um ihm allmählig frühere Verhältniffe aus bem Gebächtniffe zu bringen. Krankheit fam babei ber bar= ten Behandlung zu Gulfe, und nach mehrmonatlichem Aufenthalt in seinem Sause fand R. das arme Kind so abgestumpft, daß er glaubte, ohne Furcht, daß das Gebeimnig verrathen werben wurde, herrn Bergmanns Aufforderungen nachgeben und diesem ein Rind, deffen täglicher Anblick ihm boch nur eine Plage mar, über= laffen fonne. Doch fehren wir zur Gegenwart zuruct!

Harald war nach ber Gebirgsreife und unter guter ärztlicher Behandlung balb wieder hergestellt worden. Nachdem er Allette's Sochzeit beigewohnt hatte, war er außer Landes gereift, wurde aber im Laufe bes Sommers in Semb zuruck erwartet; bort follte er fich bann nieberlaffen und für bie theure, wiebergefundene

Bermandte leben

Der alte, ehrliche hallingische Führer hatte seinen Tob im Gebirge gefunden, fein vor Ralte und Sun= ger selbst halbtodter Enkel weinte bei feiner Leiche, als die von Frau Aftrid und Harald gesandten Leute aus den Thälern sich endlich glücklich einen Weg zur Bjö= röjasennerei durch die Schneemassen gebahnt hatten, um Jenen zu retten.

Sufanna weihte bem Greise eine aufrichtige Thrane, empfand aber felbit ein beimliches Bedauern, bag es ihr nicht vergönnt gewesen war, wie er zu fterben.

Sie fah ber Bukunft mit Unruhe entgegen.

Alls fie aber wieder ausgehen konnte, Frau Aftrid fie mit fich im Schlitten ausführte und fie Die Frühlings= luft fühlte, und bas Meer und ben flaren Simmel über ben hohen Bergen und bie grunen Garten zu beren Fuß sah, ba erwachte sie lebhaft zum Gefühl ber Schön= heit dieser Erde und bes Lebens, und fie betrachtete mit Bewunderung und Bergnügen die neuen Gegensftände, welche sie umgaben, sowohl die großartigen Naturgestalten, als das Leben und die abwechselnden Scenen in der Stadt; denn Susanna befand sich in dem lebhaften und prächtig gelegenen Bergen, Norweg's größter Handelsstadt, dem Geburtsort Hollberg's, Dahl's und Ole Bull's.

Gleichwohl sollte sie bald von allem Diesen, und was noch schwerer war, von ihrer angebeteten Herrin scheiden, denn Susanna hatte beschlossen, Harald nicht wiederzusehen. Schamröthe bedeckte ihre Wangen, als sie sich ihres Bekenntnisses auf dem Gebirge in ihrer vermeintlichen Todesstunde erinnerte, und sie fühlte, daß sie sich einander von da an nicht mehr begegnen durfeten und noch weniger in demselben Hause ohne peineliche Verlegenheit von beiden Seiten leben konnten. Sie wollte daher nicht mehr nach Semb zurücksehren, sonzbern, svald es ihre Kräfte erlaubten, zur See von Bergen nach Schweden in ihre Vaterstadt reisen, und dort am Busen ihres kleinen Lieblings ihr eignes Herz heilen und neue Kräfte zum Leben und zum Arbeizten zu sammeln suchen.

Das war aber nicht leicht für die arme Susanna, diesen Entschluß ihrer Herrin mitzutheilen; sie zitterte heftig dabei und konnte ihre Thränen nicht zurückhalten.

Es war für ihr Gefühl zugleich beruhigend und störend, als Frau Aftrid, nachdem sie Susannen schweigend angehört hatte, mit großer Ruhe antwortete:

"Du bist frei, Susanna, zu handeln, wie Du es für gut besindest, aber in drei ober vier Monaten (so lange halten mich noch meine Geschäfte hier zurück) reise ich wieder nach Semb zurück, und es würde mir schwer fallen, Dich auf der Reise zu entbehren."

"Dann begleite ich Sie! antwortete Susanna, froh barüber, daß man ihrer bedürfe, aber nachher —"

"Nachher — fuhr bie Obriftin fort — wenn Du

mich bann noch verlaffen willft, jo werbe ich für Deine

glückliche Rückfehr in Deine Beimath forgen."

Also noch einige Monate! — bachte Susanna mit wehmüthiger Freude. — Diese Monate wurden ihr unaussprechlich angenehm und fräftigend; Frau Astrid beschäftigte sich viel mit ihr und suchte in mehreren Punkten den Mängeln ihrer verwahrlosten Erziehung abzuhelsen, und Susanna war eine gelehrige Schülerin und schloß sich inniger als je an ihre Herrin, welche dabei immer mehr die Wahrheit des Sates: "Der Athem der Jugend ist heilsam," einsah.

Athem der Jugend ist heilsam," einsah.

Im Anfang des Julimonats reiste Frau Astrid wies der mit Susannen über das Gebirge, welches ihr einsmal den Tod gedroht hatte; aber um diese Jahreszeit war die Reise nicht gefährlich, wiewohl stets beschwerslich. Die Obristin war die ganze Zeit über bei guter Laune, die mit jedem Tag froher zu werden schien. Susannens Stimmung ward dagegen mit jedem Tage bedrückter, dazu trug sogar Frau Astrid's Munterfeit

bei; fie fühlte fich unenblich einfam.

Es war an einem schönen Juliabend, als sie in Heimthal ankamen. Susannens Herz schwoll vor Wehmuth, als sie den Ort und die Gegenstände, die ihr lieb waren und welche sie jett für immer verlassen sollte, sah; nie war ihr Alles so entzückend erschienen. Sie sah die Sonnenstrahlen auf dem Arhstallberge schimmern und Harald's Mährchen kam ihr in den Sinn,— sie sah den Gichwald, wo Frau Aftrid gesessen und die Wohlgerüche, welche Susanna still für sie bereitet, einzgeschlürst hatte; auch die Quelle, wo die Silberwurz wuchs, die klare Quelle, wo sie so manche frohe Stunde zugebracht hatte — nach ihr dürstete Susanna gleichzam. Die Fenster auf Semb sunkelten in der Sonne Strahl, das Haus schien illuminirt zu sein, — da drinnen hatte sie gewirft und geordnet, dort hatte sie geliebt; dort hatten des Winterabends Flammen so hell,

während Harald's Erzählungen gebrannt, still stiegen die Rauchsäulen von den Hütten im Thal empor — dort kannte sie jedes Kind, jede Kuh, kannte die Freuden und Sorgen, welche daselbst herrschten, und dort hatte sie Harald's Charakter recht kennen gelernt — immer Harald — immer kand sich sein Bild als Herzaller dieser Erinnerungen vor; aber jest — jest sollte sie bald alles Dieses, all das Schöne und Theure verslassen.

Sie gelangten jett nach Semb und wurden von Alsfiero mit freudigem Gebell begrüßt. Susanna grüßte und nickte mit Thränen im Auge allen lieben Bekann=

ten, sowohl Menschen als Thieren zu.

Die Fenster in Frau Astrid's Zimmer standen offen, und man sah durch sie durch die reizende Berspektive über das Thal mit seinem bläulichen Strom, seinen grünen Anhöhen und Abhängen und deren friedlichen Kirchthurm im Hintergrunde. Sie blieb, wie über die Schönheit der Aussicht überrascht, stehen; ihr Auge strahlte, als sie so ausrief:

"Sieh, Susanna! ist unser Thal nicht schön? und wäre es nicht herrlich hier zu leben, um Menschen zu

beglücken und felbst glücklich zu sein?"

Susanna antwortete ein rasches: "Ja!" indem sie das Zimmer verließ. Sie fühlte sich dem Ersticken nah, und nochmals erhob sich Barb'ra in ihr und sprach also:

"Schön? Ja für sie! sie denkt nicht an mich, kimmert sich nicht im geringsten um mich; Harald eben so wenig. Die geringe Dienerin, die ihnen auf der Gebirgsreise unentbehrlich war, ist jetzt im Thale übersstüssig; sie mag gehen; sie sind glücklich, sie haben an ihrem eigenen Selbst genug; ob ich lebe, ob ich sterbe, oder ob ich leide, das ist ihnen ganz gleichgültig. Gut! so will ich ihnen auch nicht länger beschwerlich fallen, ich will weit — weit von hier weggehen, will mich

auch nicht mehr um ne kummern, ich will ne vergei=

fen, wie fie mich vergeffen haben."

Bei diesen Worten rollten aber unwillführlich Thränen über ihre Wangen, mit ihnen entfloh der Barb'ra Zorn und Sanna fuhr also fort:

"Ja, ja, ich werde gehen, vorher aber sie noch segnen; mögen sie eine eben so treue, eben so ergebene Dienerin sinden; mögen sie Susanna nie vermissen — und Du, meine kleine Hulda, Du jett mein Liebling, meine einzige Freude, bald komme ich zu Dir. Auf meine Arme werde ich Dich nehmen, und zu irgend einem stillen Winkel tragen, wo ich ungestört für Dich arbeiten will. Ein wenig Brot und ein stilles Haus sinte ich sichon für uns Beibe; und wenn mein Herz von Pein erfüllt ist, so werde ich Dich an mich drücken, Du kleienes, sanstes Kind, und Gott danken, daß ich noch Jemanden auf Erden habe, den ich liebe und der auch mich liebt.

Gerade als Susanna diese Herzensergießung beendigt hatte, stand sie an der Thüre ihres Zimmers; sie össenete, trat hinein, und — blieb in stummer Uberrassedung stehen. Waren ihre Sinne noch verwirrt? oder erwachte sie erst jett aus Jahre dauernden Träumen? — Sie sah sich wieder in der kleinen Stube, in der sie so manches Jahr ihrer Jugend zugebracht hatte, das kleine Gemach, das sie sich selbst eingerichtet, gemalt und ausgeputzt, und wie sie es Harald so oft beschrieben batte — und dort am Fenster stand ja der kleinen Hulda Bett, mit der geblümten Decke und dem blauen Muslinvorhang! Dieser Anblick trieb ihr das Blut gewaltsam zum Herzen, und außer sich rief sie: "Hulda, meine kleine Hulda! —"

"Hier bin ich, Sanna! Hier ist Deine kleine Hulba!" antwortete eine fröhliche, klare Kinderstimme, die Bettdecke bewegte sich, ein engelschönes Kinderhaupt lugte daraus hervor und zwei kleine, weiße Arme streckten sich Susannen entgegen. Mit einem fast wilden Freubenschrei stürzte Susanna herbei und schloß die kleine

Schwester in ihre Arme.

Susanna war erblaßt, weinte und lachte, und wußte eine Zeit lang gar nicht, was um sie her vorging. Als sie sich aber wieder gesammelt hatte, fand sie sich auf Hulda's Bett, das Kind in ihren Armen, sizend, und über das kleine, blondgelockte Haupt neigte sich ein männliches mit dem Ausdruck tiesen Ernstes und mile der Rührung.

"Rleine Hulda — sagte Harald — bitte Susannen, daß sie auch mich ein wenig lieb habe, und daß sie zu dem, was Du mir gestattet hast, nicht: Nein, sage, bitte sie, daß ich klein Hulda meine Tochter, und Deine Su-

fanna meine Susanna nennen burfe!"

"Ja! ja! das sollst Du, Sanna! rief die kleine Hulda, indem sie mit kindlicher Innigkeit ihre Arme um Susanna's Hals schlang und eisrig fortsuhr: o, habe ihn lieb, Sanna! er hat Dich ja so lieb, das hat er mir so oft gesagt, und er selbst hat mich hieher zu Dir gesbracht, um Dich froh zu machen. Und dann sieh nur, das schöne Halsband, das er mir gegeben hat, und er hat mir auch versprochen, im Winter so hübsche Gesschichten zu erzählen; weißt Du, er kennt so viele! — Hast Du die von Kypa im Justethal gehört, Sanna? die hat er mir erzählt — und die von der guten Frau, welche nach dem schwarzen Tode umherging, und alle mutterlosen, kleinen Kinder sammelte und ihre Mutter ward. D Sanna hab' ihn lieb, und laß ihn meinen Vater werden."

Susanna ließ die kleine Schwätzerin fortfahren, ohne ein Wort sprechen zu können; sie barg ihr Gesicht an des Kindes Brust und suchte ihre wirren Gedanken zu sammeln.

"Susanna — bat Harald unruhig und innig — sehen Sie mich an, sagen Sie mir ein freundliches Wort! —"

Da erhob Susanna ihr glühendes, in Thränen ge= babetes Antlig und rief: "o, wie kann ich Ihnen je banken!"

"Wie? — fagte Harald -— daburch, baß Sie mich glücklich machen, baß Sie meine Gattin werden!"

Sufanna stand auf und fagte mit Aufrichtigkeit und Berglichkeit: "Gott weiß am besten wie glücklich ich mich fühlen würde, könnte ich glauben, daß diese Worte Ih= retwegen, und nicht einzig und allein meinetwegen ge= sprochen sind; aber ach! das kann ich nicht; ich weiß, es ift Ihr Ebelmuth, Ihre Gute -"

"Ebelmuth? ich bin bann nur edelmuthig gegen mich felbst, benn ich versichere Ihnen, Susanna, daß ich nie mehr als jetzt an mein Bestes gedacht habe, daß ich jett so egoistisch bin, wie Sie nur irgend wünschen können."

"Und Ihre Schwefter, Alette — fuhr Susanna ge= fenkten Blickes fort — ich weiß, Sie wünscht nicht mich ihre Schwester zu nennen, und -"

"Und weil Alette einmal so unvernünftig war fagte eine freundliche Frauenzimmerstimme — so ift fie

bier, beshalb um Berzeihung zu bitten. -"

Mit Diesen Worten umarmte Alette Die erstaunte Sufanna herzlich, und fuhr fort: "Sufanna, ohne Dich hatte ich jest keinen Bruber mehr; jest kenne ich Dich besser, ich habe in den Tiesen seines Herzens gelesen und weiß, daß nur Du ihn glücklich machen kannst; darum bitte ich Dich, Susanna, slehentlichst, ihn glücklich zu machen. Werde seine Gattin und meine Schwester!

"Auch Du, Alette — fagte Susanna tiefbewegt auch Du willst mich mit lieben Worten verlocken. Ach! fönntet Ihr mich vergessen machen, daß meine Schwach= heit — daß ich durch meine Bekenntnisse hervorrief — aber das kann ich nie! und darum kann ich Euch auch nicht glauben, Ihr guten, eblen Menschen! barum bitte und beschwöre ich Euch —"

"Welch' schöne Reben werben benn hier gehalten?" unterbrach fie eine ernfte Stimme und die Obriftin ftand mitten unter ber, in Liebe ftreitenben Gruppe und fprach mit angenommener Strenge wie folgt: "ich will boch nicht glauben, daß meine jungen Anverwandten und meine Tochter Susanna sich beikommen lassen, wichtige Sachen zu verhandeln und zu beschließen, ohne mich babei zu Rathe zu ziehen? Und boch merke ich an Gu= ern schuldigen Mienen, bag bie Sache fich fo verhält, und beshalb werbe ich Euch Alle zusammen bestrafen. Jest kein Wort mehr in der Angelegenheit, ehe acht Tage verflossen sind, und dann, dies begehre und for= bre ich, als Frau und Herrin vom Hause, foll biefer Streit vor mir geführt werben, und ich will auch ein Wort bei Schlichtung besfelben mitzureben haben. Sufanna bleibt inzwischen hier in sicherem Gewahrsam, und ich selbst werde sie bewachen. Glaubtest Du wirk-lich, Susanna — und dabei ging Frau Astrid's Stimme zu ben fantteften Tonen über, und fie schloß bas junge Mädchen in ihre Arme — daß ich Dich so leicht von mir laffen würde? Rein, nein, mein Kind! barin haft Du Dich betrogen! Und ba Du unfer Leben gerettet haft, so müßt Ihr wohl, Du und Deine kleine Hulda unsere Leibeigenen werden! — Doch — die Abendtafel ist un= ter ben Linden im Garten gebeckt, fommt, meine Rin= ber, und lagt uns am Tische Kräfte zu kommenben Streitigkeiten sammeln."

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21.

Der lette Streit.

Geflügelte Schaaren Kommen aus Waldnacht geflogen, Unten da fahren Stürme auf tobenden Wogen, Oben da blinket Sterlein mild, und winket Dem Zug zu der Palmen Ruh. Herbstigesang von Belhaven.

Auf Erden gibt es vielen Kummer und viel Dunkel Berbrechen und Krankheit, den Schrei der Verzweif= lung und tiefe, lange, stumme Qual. Ach! wer nennt sie alle die Klagen der Menschen mit ihren mannich= fachen, bleichen Fügungen? Aber Gott sei gelobt, es gibt auch Reichthum an Gütern und Freude, edle Hand=lungen, in Erfüllung gegangene Hossnungen, Stunden der Verzückung, Jahrzehende gedeihenbringenden Friedens, helle, heitre Hochzeitstage und stille, heilige Stersbelager.

Drei Monate nach den oben besprochenen Streitig= feiten ward auf Semb im Heimthal einer jener hellen Hochzeitstage geseiert, wo sich die Sonnen der Natur und des Menschenherzens vereinen, um ein Paradies auf Erden hervorzuzaubern, ein Paradies, welches stets daselbst gefunden wird, obgleich es meist verbors gen, gesesselt, tief gebunden ist von den unterirdischen

Mächten.

Doch aus dem Antlit der Gefallnen schimmern Die boben Spuren eines Himmel-Ursprungs Hindurch, und Daphne's Herz pocht unter'm Baste. *)

Es war ein Herbsttag; aber einer von jenen, wo eine sommerwarme Sonne, und eine krystallreine Luft

^{*)} Tegner,

die Erde vor dem azurblauen Himmelsauge in ihrer höchsten Pracht erscheinen lassen, wo die Natur der, sich in der Stunde, in welcher sie den Schleier nehmen und in ihr winterliches Grab steigen will, am köstlichsten sich schmückenden Novize gleicht. Die Höhen im Thale leuchteten im buntesten Farbenspiel, die dunkle Föhre, die saftgrünen Fichten, die vergilbende Birke, der Haselstrauch mit dem bleichen Laub, und der Wogelsbeerbaum mit rothen Beeren hingen wie Traubendüschel an diesen Höhen in mannichfaltig abwechselnden Massen, während die jest von den Fluthen des Himmels trunskene Heimbalself reißender und mächtiger, als je, das hinbrauste. Bunte, sett und reichgenährt von den Senenen herabgekommene Heerden wanderten an des Flusses grünen Ufern. Die Glocken der Kapelle schallten fröhlich durch die klare Luft, indes die Kirchgänger auf sich schlängelnden Fusswegen aus ihren Hütten zum Gotteshause hinwanderten.

Bom Strande bei Semb stieß jett eine kleine Flotte festlich geschmückter Böte ab. In dem vornehmsten derfelben saß unter einem Laub = und Blumenbogen die Herrin von Semb, aber nicht mehr die bleiche, traurige, deren Blicke das Grab zu suchen schienen. Eine neue Jugend schien ihre Wangen zu umspielen, auf ihren Lippen zu athmen, während die klaren Augen in froshem und stillem Genusse um sich, und bald auf die schöne Naturscene, bald auf das noch schönere Bild, das sie nahe vor Augen hatte: — auf ein glückliches Menschenpaar schauten. Neben ihr, mehr einem Engel als einem irdischen Kinde ähnlich, saß die kleine Hulda, einen Kranz im lichten Haar. Aber Aller Blicke waren doch gebührendermaßen vorzüglich auf Braut und Bräuzigam gerichtet, und diese Beiden waren auch wahrhaft schön und lieblich anzusehen, besonders da sie so innerslich glücklich aussahen. In einem nachfolgenden Boote sah man einen kleinen Streit zwischen einer jungen

Frau und ihrem Chegatten; ber ihr einen Mantel um= werfen wollte, welches ihr aber nicht recht war; aber man war versucht, bei seiner zärtlichen Fürsorge für bie junge Gattin, welche bald Mutter werben follte, auf feine Seite zu treten. Der Ausgang bes Streites war, bag Alf über Alette ben Sieg bavon trug. Andere Böte hatten wieder andere Hochzeitsgäste. Die Ruderer trugen sämmtlich Kränze um ihre gelben Strohhüte, und so ruderte der kleine Zug unter froher Musik über ben Strom ber Kapelle zu.

Diese war ein einfaches Gebäube, ohne alle anderen Zierrathen, als eine schöne Altartasel, und eine Menge Blumen und grüner Zweige, die jest zur Feier bes Tages die Bänke, Wände und den Fußboden schmück-

ten.

Die Predigt war einfach und herzlich, ber Gefang rein, furz - fein Mißton forte bier Die Andacht, welche bie Ginrichtung bes Gottesbienftes in Mormegen fo ge=.

eignet ift, zu erwecken und zu erhalten. *) Hier flehten Susanna und Harald den Himmel aus treuen, ernstgestimmten Bergen an, ihren festen Borfat: einander auf Erden zu lieben, in Freude und Roth zu fegnen; und bann wurden fie vor ber ganzen Gemeinde als ein Baar erflärt.

An biesem Tage war bie Rirche fehr gefüllt, und als der Hochzeitszug heimkehrte, schlossen sich ihm mehre Böte an, und begleiteten ihn mit Gesang und Hurrah=

rufen an bas jenseitige Ufer.

Aber Susanna fühlte sich nicht recht ruhig und glücklich, bis sie in Frau Aftrid's stillem Gemach ihre Stirn auf beren Schoos neigte, und beren mütterlich segnen= ben Sanbe auf ihrem Saupte fühlte. Ihr Berg war so voll von Dankbarkeit, baß es brechen zu wollen schien.

^{*)} Unspielung auf den in den schwedischen Rirchen herrschenden üblen Gebrauch: Diebstähle, gefundene Gachen u. bgl. mehr von ber Rangel abiulesen.

"Ich habe also — rief sie, indem sie Frau Astrid's Kniee umsing, und mit dem glühendsten Blicke kindlicher Liebe zu ihr aufsah — eine Mutter! ach ich bin zu glückslich, allzuglücklich! Gott hat mir, der armen Verzwaisten, eine Heimath, eine Mutter geschenkt! —"

"Und einen Gatten obendrein! den vergiß nur ja nicht, darum muß ich Dich bitten, er will auch dabei sein—" fagte Harald, indem er Susanna sanft umfaßte, und gleichfalls das Knie vor ihrer mütterlichen Freundin

beugte.

Frau Aftrid schloß sie Beide innig in ihre Arme, und fagte mit fanfter, herzinniger Stimme, indem fie mit ihnen an bas Fenfter, von bem aus man bas schöne Thal in seiner ganzen Ausbehnung fah, trat: "Wir be= ginnen von heute an gemeinschaftlich ein neues Leben, und wollen es uns gegenseitig glücklich zu machen stre= ben. In Diefer Stunde, wo ich zwischen Guch, meine Rinder! ftehe und vor mich, wie in eine schöne Zukunft, blicke, glaube ich so gut einzusehen, wie es werden kann. Wir besitzen hier keine Kunstreichthümer, nicht die abswechselungsvollen Scenen eines großen Weltlebens, um uns damit zu beleben, uns zu unterhalten, aber unser Leben braucht beshalb nicht schwerfällig und an bas Riedere gefesselt zu fein. Wir haben ben Simmel, wir haben die Natur; wir wollen jenen in unsere Bergen, in unser Saus herabrufen, und diese um ihre ftillen Wunder befragen und unsere Herzen durch beren Be= trachtung erheben. Von ber Gluth unseres stillen Seer= bes aus wollen wir mitunter die Bewegungen im gro= Ben Weltbrama betrachten, um nachher besto frober zu unserer eigenen fleinen Buhne gurudgutehren, und Alle bedacht fein, unfere Rollen gut burchzuführen; und ich gelobe Euch im Voraus — fuhr sie in einen scherz= haften Ton übergehend fort, — daß es nicht in mei= ner Rolle vorkommen wird, oft jo lange Reben wie Die jetige zu halten.

Barald und Sufanna versicherten ihr aber gemein= schaftlich, daß sie unmöglich zu lange reden könne. "Nun, nun! — sagte sie freundlich — wenn Ihr

mitunter ben Predigten der alten Frau zuhören wollt, io will fie bagegen oft mit Euch Rind werben und mit Guch - von Euch lernen. Ich bin jett gleichsam neu= gierig auf die Ratur und febne mich barnach, ihre nähere Bekanntschaft zu machen; ber Gedanke baran wirft eine Art Frühlingsglanz über meinen Gerbst."

"Gewiß - fagte Haralb - wirft ber Umgang mit ber Natur verjungend und wohlthuend auf bas Menichenherz. Ich bente stets mit Freude an Göthe, als er in seinem achtzigsten Jahre einmal, im Frühling, sonnverbrannt und fröhlich von einem Aufenthalte auf dem Lande zurückkehrte; er sagte: — ""ich habe mich mit den Weinranken unterhalten, und Ihr könnt nicht glauben, wie viele ichone Sachen fie mir erzählt ha= ben."" Glaubt man hierbei nicht ein neues goldnes Alter, indem bie Stimmen ber Ratur bem Ohre bes Menschen verständlich werden, und er im Gespräch mit ihr höhere Weisheit und Lebensfrieden schöpfen wird, hervorschimmern zu seben ?"

"Unsere Weisheit — sagte Frau Aftrid, fich lächeld umsehend - hat Susanna inzwischen nicht baran ge= hindert, flüger zu fein, als wir, benn fie hat an Die Sochzeitsgäste gedacht, während wir sie rein vergeffen

haben; aber wir wollen ihr jest folgen!" -

Nach dem von Toasten und Gefängen, und besonders von herzlicher Fröhlichkeit gewürzten Hochzeitsmahle, zog nich die Obriftin in ihre Gemächer zurück, und Allette übernahm fo lange bie Rolle ber Wirthin.

Un ihrem Schreibtische figend ichrieb Frau Aftrib

mit lebensvollem Blicke und eilig folgende Zeilen:

"Kommen Sie jett! Kommen Sie, mein vä=
"terlicher Freund, und sehen Sie Ihre Wünsche,
"ihre Prophezeihungen erfüllt, kommen Sie, und
"sehen sie Glückseligkeit und unsägliche Dankbarkeit
"in dieser, selbst der Hoffnung so lang verschlos=
"sengewesenen Brust; empfangen Sie mein Reu=
"bekenntniß, wegen meines Kleinmuthes, meines
"Murrens, kommen Sie mir danken zu helsen!
"Ich sehne mich danach, Ihnen mündlich mitthei=
"len zu können, wie Vieles sich in mir verändert
"hat, wie tausend Lebens= und Freudenkeime,
"welche ich längst für erstorben hielt, jett in mei=
"ner verzüngten Seele emporschießen. Ich wundre
"mich täglich über die Gefühle, die Eindrücke,
"die ich empfange, ich kenne mich kaum selbst
"wieder. D, mein Freund, wie sehr hatten Sie
"Recht: es ist nie zu spät!

"Alch! könnte ich doch von allen bedrückten, ge=
"beugten Seelen gehört werden! ich würde ihnen
"zurufen: Erhebt Euer Haupt, glaubt noch an
"die Zukunft und wähnt nur nicht, daß es zu spät
"sei! Seht! auch ich war von langen Leiden nie=
"dergebeugt, das Alter hatte mich inzwischen be=
"schlichen, und ich glaubte, daß alle meine Kraft
"verschwunden, daß mein Leben, mein Leiden ver=
"geblich gewesen sei — und seht! Mein Haupt
"wurde erhoben, mein Herz versöhnt, mein Geist
"gestärkt, und jetzt, in meinem funfzigsten Jahr,
"gehe ich einer neuen Zukunft, von Allem, was
"das Leben Schönstes und Lieblichstes beut, ge=

"leitet, entgegen.

"Die Verwandlung in meiner Seele hat mich "Leben und Leiden besser begreisen lassen, und "ich weiß jett sicher: es gibt kein fruchtlo= "ses Leiden, und kein tugendhaftes Be= "streben ist vergeblich. Mögen Wintertage "und Nächte das ausgestreute Samenkorn unter "ihrer Schneehülle begraben, wenn der Frühling "kommt, so wird es sich bewähren, daß viel "Brot "in Winternacht wächst." — Mir hat die Vorse"hung den Schleier noch auf Erden zu lüften "geruht, mancher Anderen wird er erst gelüftet, "wenn sich ihr Auge dem Erdentage geschlossen "hat, aber Alle werden sie einst das sehen, was "ich jeht sehe; das erkennen, was ich jeht schon "in Freude und bankersüllt erkenne.

Rlar und hell liegt jett mein Weg vor mir. Gemeinschaftlich mit meinen geliebten Rindern, "mit meinem Jugenblehrer und Freund, ber, wie "ich hoffe, ben Abend feines Lebens bei mir zu= "bringen wird, will ich aus biefer Gegend ein "Friedensthal schaffen! und wenn ich Diefes "und Jenes verlaffen muß, fo moge mit ber Er= "innerung an mich Friede bei ihnen weilen! "Und jest, bu nahendes Alter, das schon fühl "meine Stirne anhaucht, die Winterdämmerung "bes Erbenlebens, in bas meine Tage immer mehr und mehr niedersinken, kommt und feid "willfommen! Ich fürchte Euch nicht mehr, benn "in meinem Bergen ift es licht und warm ge= "worden. Selbst unter ben forperlichen Schmer= "zen und Qualen werbe ich nicht mehr ben Werth "bes Lebens verkennen, sonbern mit Blicken, Die "für alles Gute auf Erben offen find zu meinen "Theuern sagen:

Beklaget mich nicht, ich glube vor Luft, himmlische Rub' in ber Bruft.

Gerade als Frau Astrid ihre Feder niederlegte, und ihr thränenklares, strahlendes Auge aufschlug, erblickte sie Harald und Susanna, die Arm in Arm in's Thal hinab wandelten. Sie gingen so fröhlich zusammen, und schienen gleichwohl miteinander zu streiten. Es war

aber auch zwischen ihnen von einer wichtigen Sache die Rede, nämlich: wer von Beiden in Zukunft im Hause daß lette Wort behalten solle? Harald behauptere daß es künftighin sein, als des Herrn und Hausvaters, ausschließliches Recht sei. Susanna dagegen erklärte, daß sie gar nicht nach seinem Rechte zu fragen gedenke, sondern, wenn sie Recht habe, dieses bis auf's Aeuperste versechten wolle. Dabei waren sie unvermerkt zur Quelle: — dem Haderwasser — die ihre ersten Streitigkeiten gesehen hatte, und über der jetzt, wie damals, die Tauben auf silberglänzenden Schwingen kreisten, gekommen. Hier ergriff Harald Susannens Hand, führte sie zur Quelle, und sagte seierlich:

"Meine Gattin! ich habe bis jett im Scherz gesproschen, jett ist aber die Zeit des Ernstes gekommen. Unsere Vorsahren schwuren bei Leipters hellen Fluthen, und ich schwöre jett bei denen dieser klaren Quelle, daß, wenn Du mir späterhin einmal mehr, als meine Charakterstärke vertragen kann, widersprichst, ich Dich zum Schweigen bringen und zu schweigen zwingen werde

- und zwar auf biefe Beife" - -

Von irgend einer wunderbaren Sympathie ergriffen, ließen sich die Tauben jett plötlich auf der jungen Chegattin Haupt und Schultern nieder. Aller Streit war zu Ende, und man konnte das leise, tändelnde Murmeln der Quelle hören — es schien zu slüstern von —

Was war's, du Fluth, blauschäumend, Das dein Auge schauen muß?

Die Quelle flüfterte:

Zwei Streitende vereinend Go selig sich — im Rug!

"Aha! da haben wir sie! rief eine muntere Stimme unweit der Kuffenden, aber ich muß Euch sagen, daß

ei gang und gar nicht artig ift, jo feine Gafte in

otich zu laffen, um -"

"Komm, Susanna! — unterbrach Alette, indem sie die tieserröthende Susanna am Arm ersäßte — komm! wir wollen die egoistischen Herren da, die immer aufgewartet sein wollen, ein wenig sich selbst überlassen, das thut ihnen außerordentlich gut; wir aber wollen inzwischen zusammengehen und uns einander unsere innersten Gedanken über sie mittheilen."

"Süße Alette! — fagte Susanna, dankbar dafür, auf diese Art von ihres Schwagers Lerow Späßen erlöst zu werden — wie macht es mich glücklich, Dich, trop Deiner so sehr von Dir gefürchteten Umsiedelung nach Norden hinauf, so froh und gesund zu sehen! —"

"Ach! — sagte Alette leise und innig, ein Mann, wie mein Lexow, kann überall auf Erden Sommer und Seligkeit blühen machen, aber — und jetzt legte sich wieder der melancholische Zug auf ihr Gesicht, aber sie bezwang sich und fuhr fröhlich fort: — aber wir brauchen den lieben Herren da keine Lobrede zu halten, welche sich, wie ich merke, nur vornehmen, und zuzuhören, und darum (hier erhob sie ihre Stimme bedeutend) da wir nun mit meinem Mann fertig sind, so laß und auch dem Deinigen seinen wohlverdienten Bescheid geben. Ist er nicht — unter und gesagt — egoistisch und despotisch?"

"Das stelle ich in Abrede — rief Harald, indem er vorsprang und sich vor Susanna stellte — und Du, liebe Frau, sage etwas Anderes — wenn Du es wagst."

"Wagst? — rief Alette — sie muß es wagen, benn Du bekräftigst meine Worte so gerade durch Deine Handlung. — Ist er nicht ein Despot, Susanna?"

"Bin ich ein Despot, Susanna? Ich sage tausendmal:

Rein! Was fagit Dr?"

"Ich sage — nichts," antwortete Susanna erröthenb, Etreit und Frieden. 1. indem sie mit einer holden Bewegung bei Seite ub näher zn Aletten trat — "aber — ich benke, was 15 will."

"Es ift boch gut — rief Haralb — ein Mittel ge=

funden zu haben, bas lette Wort zu behalten."

"Haft Du das entdeckt, Schwager? — fragte Lexow lachend. — Nun, das war ja eine beinahe wichtigere Entdeckung, als die des Columbus. Theile sie mir nur jedenfalls sogleich mit."

"Bürde Dir durchaus zu gar nichts nützen — wenbete Alette ihren hübschen Kopf spaßhafttrotig ihm zuwendend, ein — benn mein Wort ift auf alle Fälle

immer ein anberes, als bas Deinige."

.. Wie ?"

"Ja — mein lettes Wort, so wie mein letter Ge= danke ist immer — Alf!"

"Meine Alette! meine fuße Allette! warum diese

Thränen?"

"Susanna! — flüsterte Harald, — ich will Dich nur bei Zeiten darauf vorbereiten: mein letztes Wort ist immer — Sanna!"

"Und meines — Harald!"

Susanna ging nun wieder an Harald's, Alette an ihres Alf's Arme.

Nachdem wir am Schlusse unserer Erzählung so muntere Auftritte vorgeführt haben, ach, warum müssen wir noch einen Auftritt tragischer Natur schildern? Aber das Schicksal gebeut es so, und wir sind gezwungen mitzutheilen, — daß die graue und die weiße Gans! — weine nicht gefühlvoller Leser! welche schon drei Wochen vor Susanna's Hochzeit auf die Mast gesetzt waren, ein hadervolles Leben vor dieser Hochzeit schlossen, und, in einem stattlichen à la daube vereint,

zur Feier des Tages, der Harald's und Susanna's letten Streit und den Beginn ihrer ewigen Verbindung sah, fervirt und gespeist wurden.

Späterhin, während ihrer glücklichen Ehe, stand Sussanna oft, von den gesiederten Schaaren, welche sie fützterte, umgeben, an der klaren Quelle, und sang zweikleinen, munteren, braunäugigen Knaben, und einem jungen, aufblühenden Mädchen mit der Überzeugung eines glücklichen Herzens folgendes kleine Lied vor:

Rleine Neckereien Machen kleine Pein, Wenn man einander nur liebt. Trüber himmel auch Klärt sich wieder auf; Das ift der Dinge Lauf.

Herz gleicht kleinem Thier, Das aus dem Revier Oftmals bricht mit Gewalt. Glaub' und Lieb' dazu Schmeicheln es zur Ruh, Schmeicheln es zur Ruh gar bald. *)

*) Geijer.

Nachwort.

Freundlicher Leser! Wenn Du mit obigen Streitig= feiten zu einem glücklichen Ende gekommen bift, fo fällt es Dir vielleicht im Traume nicht ein, daß noch ein Saber zwischen - Dir und - mir bevorsteht. Aber bas muß sich unfehlbar creignen, wenn Du, wie bis= her öfters, das, was ich Skizzen genannt habe, die doch keinen Anspruch auf den strengen Zusammenhang und die Enwickelung eines Romans, wenn fie auch freilich wohl zusammenhängen konnten, machen, Roman nennen willft. Willft Du sie aber z. B. wie Gras= halme ober Blumen auf einem Wiesenstück, Die fich auf verschiedenen Stängeln im Winde schaukeln, und ben= noch ihre Wurzeln in einem und bemfelben Erdboben haben, und sich im Lichte einer gemeinsamen Sonne entfalten, betrachten - fiebe! bann fchließen wir Frieden, und ich wünsche nur, daß sie Deinem Bergen ein freundliches Wörtlein von dem Lichtpunkte, der sich in jedem Zustande, in jedem Tropfen des Daseins, befin= det, von dem Lenz, der sich für edle Seelen früher oder später aus der winterlichen Hulle emporringt, zuflu= ftern mögen!

Den norwegischen Schriftstellern, welche auf der Gesbirgsreise oder der Wanderung in den Legenden des Landes meine Führer gewesen sind, statte ich hiermit meine Erkenntlichkeit ab, und eben so aus tiesstem Herzen den vielen wohlwollenden und liebenswürdigen Menschen, welche ich in dem schönen Lande, in dessen Wäldern man so frisch und frei athmet, in dessen gastefreiem Schoose auch ich einstmals eine liebe friedens

volle Beimarh fand, fennen lernte.

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Wenn in einem kleinern oder größern geselligen Kreise die Unterhaltung durch Musik belebt werden soll, so wird man am liebsten und zweckmäßigsten sich zum mehrstimmisgen Gesange mit Begleitung des Pianoforte wenden. Duetsten und Terzetten sind hierzu besonders geeignet, da die musicalischen Kräfte einer kleinern Gesellschaft dazu am ersten ausreichen. Für solche Fälle pflegt es aber leicht an zweckmäßigen Musicalien zu fehlen, da nur selten Jemand im Besitz eines solchen Vorraths davon ist, um entsprechende Sachen sogleich zur Auswahl zu haben. Solchem Bedürfnist abzuhelsen, ist die vorliegende Sammlung veranstaltet und mit Gorgfalt ausgewählt worden.

Shakspeare's Frauengestalten.

Charafteristifen

Mrs. Jamesou.

Ueberset

Levin Schücking.

Auch unter dem Titel:

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Indem die berühmte Verfasserin in diesem Werke die weiblichen Charaktere in Shakiveare's Dramen entwidelt, zeigt fie dem überraschten Lefer eine Fülle liefer Belt= und Menschenkenntniß, verbunden mit feinem weiblichen Gefühl, daß es kaum noch der glänzenden Darstellung bedarf, um dies Bert zu einem Lieblingebuche aller Berehrer des un= sterblichen Shakspeare zu machen. Es ist darum demselben auch einer der ersten Plätze unter den vielen Commentaren zu Shakspeare anzuweisen, und wer an der hand der edlen Berfasserin die erhabenen Schöpfungen des großen Briten betrachtet, dem wird eine Fülle neuer Anschauungen werden, Die ihn mit vermehrter Luft in den unerschöpflichen Reich. thum der Chaffpeare'ichen Belt fich verfenten läßt.

"Um dauernoften" - fo außert fich das Leipziger Conversationslexicon über dies Wert - begrundete Anna Jameson ibren Ruf durch ihr Wert: Chakspeare's Frauengestalten. Sie enthüllt darin mit dem feinften Takte die Geheimnisse des weiblichen Herzens 1c." (vergl.

den betreff. Artifel.)

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einige Bemertungen über Dieselben erlaubt.

Die Berke der Berfasserin sind entsprungen aus dem Drange, diejenigen religiösen Ansichten und Ueberzeugungen, bei denen sie selbst sich so gludlich und beruhigt fühlte, auch Andern mitzutheilen. Sie zeugen alle von einem edlen, tief religiösen Gemuthe, das für die Beglückung seiner Mitmenschen vermittelst der Lehren der christlichen Religion entstammt ist. Der Geist der Milde und Liebe, der überall dem Leser entgegentritt, muß schon sedes Gemuth, das nicht ganz der Religion und ihren Eindrücken entfremdet ist, höchst wohlsthuend berühren; wer aber sich der Berfasserin verwandt fühlt, in religiöser Richtung und Ueberzeugung, der muß diese Schristen als die bereckesten Bertheidiger und Berbreiter dieses Glaubens mit Begeisterung preisen und sich verpflichtet hal

ten, solche mit Kraft u. Nachdruck in seinem Kreise zu verstreiten.",,,Ein Erbauungsbuch," sagt die Jenaer Litezraturzeitung von 1831, No. 96., "möchten Manche absgewiesen haben, eine Rovelle zieht allgemeiner an, die Form gibt eine lebendigere Ueberzeus gung, und so darf die Verfasserin hoffen, auch Weltkinder für ihren Glauben zu gewinnen, der die reinste Christuslehre ist. — Ein jedes nicht verstockte, für den lauteren Geist der Ehristuslehre empfängliche Gemüth sollte in diesen Schriften in einsamen Stunden Trost, Erbauung, Befestigung im Glauben suchen, und wahrlich, es wird sie finden!""



PANSIE:

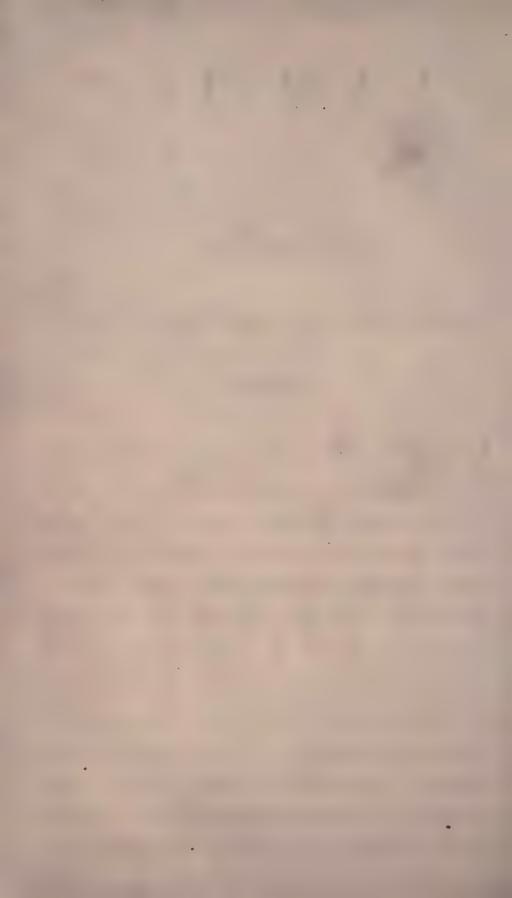
A Fragment.

THE LAST LITERARY EFFORT OF

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

. LONDON:

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN, PICCAD ILLY.



NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.



It is with a sad pleasure that readers who have previously made an acquaintance with "The Scarlet Letter," and "The House with the Seven Gables," will find before them the first chapter of "The Dolliver Romance," the latest record of Nathaniel Hawthorne meant for the public eye. The charm of his description and the sweet flow of his style will lead all to read on to the closing paragraph. With its harmonious cadences, the music of this quaint, mystic overture is suddenly hushed, and we seem to hear instead the tolling of a bell in the

far distance. The procession of shadowy characters which was gathering in our imaginations about the ancient man and the little child who come so clearly before our sight seems to fade away, and in its place a slow-pacing train winds through the village-road and up the wooded hill-side until it stops at a little opening among the tall trees. There the bed is made in which he whose dreams had peopled our common life with shapes and thoughts of beauty and wonder is to take his rest. This is the end of the first chapter we have been reading, and of that other first chapter in the life of an Immortal, whose folded pages will be opened, we trust, in the light of a brighter day.

It was my fortune to be among the last of the friends who looked upon Hawthorne's living face. Late in the afternoon of the day before he left Boston on his last journey, I called upon him at the hotel where he was staying. He had gone out

but a moment before. Looking along the street, I saw a figure at some distance in advance which could only be his, -but how changed from his former port and figure! There was no mistaking the long iron-grey locks, the carriage of the head, and the general look of the natural outlines and movement; but he seemed to have shrunken in all his dimensions, and faltered along. with an uncertain, feeble step, as if every movement were an effort. I joined him, and we walked together half an hour, during which time I learned so much of his state of mind and body as could be got at without worrying him with suggestive questions,-my object being to form an opinion of his condition, as I had been requested to do, and to give him some hints that might be useful to him on his journey.

His aspect, medically considered, was very unfavourable. There were persistent local symptoms, referred especially to the stomach,—"boring pain," distension, diffi-

cult digestion, with great wasting of flesh and strength. He was very gentle, very willing to answer questions, very docile to such counsel as I offered him, but evidently had no hope of recovering his health. He spoke as if his work were done, and he should write no more.

With all his obvious depression, there was no failing noticeable in his conversational powers. There was the same backwardness and hesitancy which in his best days it was hard for him to overcome, so that talking with him was almost like lovemaking, and his shy, beautiful soul had to be wooed from its bashful pudency like an unschooled maiden. The calm despondency with which he spoke about himself confirmed the unfavourable opinion suggested by his look and history.

The journey on which Mr. Hawthorne was setting out, when I saw him, was undertaken for the benefit of his health. A few weeks earlier he had left Boston on a

similar errand in company with Mr. William D. Ticknor, who had kindly volunteered to be his companion in a trip which promised to be of some extent and duration, and from which this faithful friend, whose generous devotion deserves the most grateful remembrance, hoped to bring him back restored, or at least made stronger. Death joined the travellers, but it was not the invalid whom he selected as his victim. The strong man was taken, and the suffering valetudinarian found himself charged with those last duties which he was so soon to need at the hands of others. The fatigue of mind and body thus substituted for the recreation which he greatly needed must have hastened the course of his disease, or at least have weakened his powers of resistance to no small extent.

Once more, however, in company with his old college-friend and classmate, Ex-President Pierce, he made the attempt to recover his lost health by this second journey. My visit to him on the day before his departure was a somewhat peculiar one, partly of friendship, but partly also in compliance with the request I have referred to.

I asked only such questions as were likely to afford practical hints as to the way in which he should manage himself on his journey. It was more important that he should go away as hopeful as might be than that a searching examination should point him to the precise part diseased, condemning him to a forlorn self-knowledge such as the masters of the art of diagnosis sometimes rashly substitute for the ignorance which is comparative happiness. Being supposed to remember something of the craft pleasantly satirized in the chapter before us, I volunteered, not "an infallible panacea of my own distillation," but some familiar palliatives which I hoped might relieve the symptoms of which he complained most. The history of his disease must, I

suppose, remain unwritten, and perhaps it is just as well that it should be so. Men of sensibility and genius hate to have their infirmities dragged out of them by the roots in exhaustive series of cross-questionings and harassing physical explorations, and he who has enlarged the domain of the human soul may perhaps be spared his contribution to the pathology of the human body. At least, I was thankful that it was not my duty to sound all the jarring chords of this sensitive organism, and that a few cheering words and the prescription of a not ungrateful sedative and cordial or two could not lay on me the reproach of having given him his "final bitter taste of this world, perhaps doomed to be a recollected nauseousness in the next."

There was nothing in Mr. Hawthorne's aspect that gave warning of so sudden an end as that which startled us all. It seems probable that he died by the gentlest of all modes of release,—fainting,—without the

trouble and confusion of coming back to life; a way of ending liable to happen in any disease attended with much debility.

Mr. Hawthorne died in the town of Plymouth, New Hampshire, on the nine-teenth of May. The moment, and even the hour, could not be told, for he had passed away without giving any sign of suffering, such as might call the attention of the friend near him. On Monday, the twenty-third of May, his body was given back to earth in the place where he had long lived, and which he had helped to make widely known,—the ancient town of Concord.

The day of his burial will always live in the memory of all who shared in its solemn, grateful duties. All the fair sights and sweet sounds of the opening season mingled their enchantments as if in homage to the dead master, who, as a lover of Nature and a student of life, had given such wealth of poetry to our New England home, and invested the stern outlines of Puritan character with the colours of romance. It was the bridal day of the season, perfect in light as if heaven were looking on, perfect in air as if Nature herself were sighing for our loss. The orchards were all in fresh flower,—

"One boundless blush, one white-empurpled shower Of mingled blossoms;"—

the banks were literally blue with violets; the elms were putting out their tender leaves, just in that passing aspect which Raphael loved to pencil in the backgrounds of his holy pictures, not as yet printing deep shadows, but only mottling the sunshine at their feet. The birds were in full song; the pines were musical with the soft winds they sweetened. All was in faultless accord, and every heart was filled with the beauty that flooded the landscape.

The church where the funeral services were performed was luminous with the

whitest blossoms of the luxuriant spring. A great throng of those who loved him, of those who honoured his genius, of those who held him in kindly esteem as a neighbour and friend, filled the edifice. Most of those who were present wished to look once more at the features which they remembered with the lights and shadows of life's sunshine upon them. The cold moonbeam of death lay white on the noble forehead, and still placid features; but they never looked fuller of power than in this last aspect with which they met the eyes that were turned upon them.

In a patch of sunlight, flecked by the shade of tall, murmuring pines, at the summit of a gently swelling mound where the wild-flowers had climbed to find the light and the stirring of fresh breezes, the tired poet was laid beneath the green turf. Poet let us call him, though his chants were not modulated in the rhythm of verse. The element of poetry is air: we know the poet

by his atmospheric effects, by the blue of his distances, by the softening of every hard outline he touches, by the silvery mist in which he veils deformity and clothes what is common so that it changes to awe-inspiring mystery, by the clouds of gold and purple which are the drapery of his dreams. And surely we* have had but one prose-writer who could be compared with him in aërial perspective, if we may use the painter's term. If Irving is the Claude of our unrhymed poetry, Hawthorne is its Poussin.

This is not the occasion for the analysis and valuation of Hawthorne's genius. If the reader wishes to see a thoughtful and generous estimate of his powers, and a just recognition of the singular beauty of his style, he may turn to the number of "The Atlantic Monthly Magazine" published in

^{*} This tribute to the memory of Hawthorne was written, as will have been surmised, by a friend and fellow-countryman.

May, 1860. The last effort of Hawthorne's creative mind is before him in the chapter here printed. The hand of the dead master shows itself in every line. The shapes and scenes he pictures slide at once into our consciousness, as if they belonged there as much as our own homes and relatives. That limpid flow of expression, never labouring, never shallow, never hurried nor uneven nor turbid, but moving on with tranquil force, clear to the depths of its profoundest thought, shows itself with all its consummate perfections. Our literature could ill spare the rich ripe autumn of such a life as Hawthorne's, but he has left enough to keep his name in remembrance as long as the language in which he shaped his deep imaginations is spoken by human lips.

PANSIE

AND

DOCTOR DOLLIVER.



Doctor Dolliver, a worthy personage of extreme antiquity, was aroused rather prematurely, one summer morning, by the shouts of the child Pansie, in an adjoining chamber, summoning Old Martha (who performed the duties of nurse, housekeeper, and kitchen-maid in the Doctor's establishment) to take up her little ladyship and dress her. The old gentleman woke with more than his customary alacrity, and, after taking a moment to gather his wits about

him, pulled aside the faded moreen curtains of his ancient bed, and thrust his head into a beam of sunshine that caused him to wink and withdraw it again. This transitory glimpse of good Dr. Dolliver showed a flannel nightcap, fringed round with stray locks of silvery white hair, and surmounting a meagre and duskily yellow visage, which was crossed and criss-crossed with a record of his long life in wrinkles, faithfully written, no doubt, but with such cramped chirography of Father Time that the purport was illegible. It seemed hardly worth while for the patriarch to get out of bed any more, and bring his forlorn shadow into the summer day that was made for younger folks. The Doctor, however, was by no means of that opinion, being considerably encouraged towards the toil of living twenty-four hours longer by the comparative ease with which he found himself going through the usually painful process of bestirring his rusty joints (stif-

fened by the very rest and sleep that should have made them pliable), and putting them in a condition to bear his weight upon the floor. Nor was he absolutely disheartened by the idea of those tonsorial, ablutionary, and personally decorative labours which are apt to become so intolerably irksome to an old gentleman, after performing them daily and daily for fifty, sixty, or seventy years, and finding them still as immitigably recurrent as at first. Dr. Dolliver could nowise account for this happy condition of his spirits and physical energies, until he remembered taking an experimental sip of a certain cordial which was long ago prepared by his grandson and carefully sealed up in a bottle, and had been reposited in a dark closet among a parcel of effete medicines ever since that gifted young man's death.

"It may have wrought effect upon me," thought the Doctor, shaking his head as he lifted it again from the pillow. "It may

be so; for poor Cornelius oftentimes instilled a strange efficacy into his perilous drugs. But I will rather believe it to be the operation of God's mercy, which may have temporarily invigorated my feeble age for little Pansie's sake."

A twinge of his familiar rheumatism, as he put his foot out of bed, taught him that he must not reckon too confidently upon even a day's respite from the intrusive family of aches and infirmities which, with their proverbial fidelity to attachments once formed, had long been the closest acquaintances that the poor old gentleman had in the world. Nevertheless, he fancied the twinge a little less poignant than those of yesterday; and, moreover, after stinging him pretty smartly, it passed gradually off with a thrill, which, in its latter stages, grew to be almost agreeable. Pain is but pleasure too strongly emphasized. With cautious movements, and only a groan or two, the good Doctor transferred himself from the bed to the floor, where he stood

awhile, gazing from one piece of quaint furniture to another, (such as stiff-backed May-flower chairs, an oaken chest-ofdrawers carved cunningly with shapes of animals and wreaths of foliage, a table with multitudinous legs, a family-record in faded embroidery, a shelf of black-bound books, a dirty heap of gallipots and phials in a dim corner,) -gazing at these things and steadying himself by the bedpost, while his inert brain, still partially benumbed with sleep, came slowly into accordance with the realities about him. The object which most helped to bring Dr. Dolliver completely to his waking perceptions was one that common observers might suppose to have been snatched bodily out of his dreams. The same sunbeam that had dazzled the Doctor between the bed-curtains gleamed on the weather-beaten gilding which had once adorned this mysterious symbol, and showed it to be an enormous serpent, twining round a wooden post, and reaching quite from the floor of the chamber to its ceiling.

It was evidently a thing that could boast of considerable antiquity, the dry-rot having eaten out its eyes and gnawed away the tip of its tail; and it must have stood long exposed to the atmosphere, for a kind of grey moss had partially overspread its tarnished gilt surface, and a swallow, or other familiar little bird, in some bygone summer, seemed to have built its nest in the yawning and exaggerated mouth. It looked like a kind of Manichæan idol, which might have been elevated on a pedestal for a century or so, enjoying the worship of its votaries in the open air, until the impious sect perished from among men,-all save old Dr. Dolliver, who had set up the monster in his bedchamber for the convenience of private devotion. But we are unpardonable in suggesting such a phantasy to the prejudice of our venerable friend, knowing him to have been as pious and upright a Christian, and with as little of the serpent in his character, as ever came of Puritan lineage. Not to make a further mystery about a

very simple matter, this bedimmed and rotten reptile was once the medical emblem or apothecary's sign of the famous Dr. Swinnerton, who practised physic in the earlier days of New England, when a head of Æsculapius or Hippocrates would have vexed the souls of the righteous as savouring of heathendom. The ancient dispenser of drugs had therefore set up an image of the Brazen Serpent, and followed his business for many years, with great credit, under this Scriptural device; and Dr. Dolliver, being the apprentice, pupil, and humble friend of the learned Swinnerton's old age, had inherited the symbolic snake, and much other valuable property, by his bequest.

While the patriarch was putting on his small-clothes, he took care to stand in the parallelogram of bright sunshine that fell upon the uncarpeted floor. The summer warmth was very genial to his system, and yet made him shiver; his wintry veins rejoiced at it, though the reviving blood

tingled through them with a half painful and only half pleasurable titillation. For the first few moments after creeping out of bed, he kept his back to the sunny window and seemed mysteriously shy of glancing thitherward; but as the June fervour pervaded him more and more thoroughly, he turned bravely about, and looked forth at a burial-ground on the corner of which he dwelt. There lay many an old acquaintance, who had gone to sleep with the flavour of Dr. Dolliver's tinctures and powders upon his tongue; it was the patient's final bitter taste of this world, and perhaps doomed to be a recollected nauseousness in the next. Yesterday, in the chill of his forlorn old age, the Doctor expected soon to stretch out his weary bones among that quiet community, and might scarcely have shrunk from the prospect on his own account, except, indeed, that he dreamily mixed up the infirmities of his present condition with the repose of the approaching one, being haunted by a notion

that the damp earth, under the grass and dandelions, must needs be pernicious for his cough and his rheumatism. But, this morning, the cheerful sunbeams, or the mere taste of his grandson's cordial that he had taken at bed-time, or the fitful vigour that often sports irreverently with aged people, had caused an unfrozen drop of youthfulness, somewhere within him, to expand.

"Hem! ahem!" quoth the Doctor, hoping with one effort to clear his throat of the dregs of a ten years' cough. "Matters are not so far gone with me as I thought. I have known mighty sensible men, when only a little age-stricken or otherwise out of sorts, to die of mere faintheartedness, a great deal sooner than they need."

He shook his silvery head at his own image in the looking-glass, as if to impress the apophthegm on that shadowy representative of himself; and for his part, he determined to pluck up a spirit and live as long as he possibly could, if it were only for the sake of little Pansie, who stood as close to one extremity of human life as her great-grandfather to the other. This child of three years old occupied all the unfossilized portion of good Dr. Dolliver's heart. Every other interest that he formerly had, and the entire confraternity of persons whom he once loved, had long ago departed, and the poor Doctor could not follow them, because the grasp of Pansie's baby-fingers held him back.

So he crammed a great silver watch into his fob, and drew on a patchwork morning-gown of an ancient fashion. Its original material was said to have been the embroidered front of his own wedding waist-coat and the silken skirt of his wife's bridal attire, which his eldest granddaughter had taken from the carved chest-of-drawers, after poor Bessie, the beloved of his youth, had been half a century in the grave. Throughout many of the intervening years, as the garment got ragged, the spinsters of

the old man's family had quilted their duty and affection into it in the shape of patches upon patches, rose-colour, crimson, blue, violet, and green, and then (as their hopes faded, and their life kept growing shadier, and their attire took a sombre hue) sober grey and great fragments of funereal black, until the Doctor could revive the memory of most things that had befallen him by looking at his patchwork-gown, as it hung upon a chair. And now it was ragged again, and all the fingers that should have mended it were cold. It had an Eastern fragrance, too, a smell of drugs, strongscented herbs, and spicy gums, gathered from the many potent infusions that had from time to time been spilt over it; so that, snuffing him afar off, you might have taken Dr. Dolliver for a mummy, and could hardly have been undeceived by his shrunken and torpid aspect, as he crept nearer.

Wrapped in his odorous and many-coloured robe, he took staff in hand and moved pretty vigorously to the head of the staircase. As it was somewhat steep, and but dimly lighted, he began cautiously to descend, putting his left hand on the banister, and poking down his long stick to assist him in making sure of the successive steps; and thus he became a living illustration of the accuracy of Scripture, where it describes the aged as being "afraid of that which is high,"-a truth that is often found to have a sadder purport than its external one. Half-way to the bottom, however, the Doctor heard the impatient and authoritative tones of little Pansie, -Queen Pansie, as she might fairly have been styled, in reference to her position in the household, -calling amain for grandpapa and breakfast. He was startled into such perilous activity by the summons, that his heels slid on the stairs, the slippers were shuffled off his feet, and he saved himself from a tumble only by quickening his pace, and coming down at almost a run.

"Mercy on my poor old bones!" mentally exclaimed the Doctor, fancying himself fractured in fifty places. "Some of them are broken, surely, and methinks my heart has leaped out of my mouth! What! all right? Well, well! but Providence is kinder to me than I deserve, prancing down this steep staircase like a kid of three months old!"

He bent stiffly to gather up his slippers and fallen staff; and meanwhile Pansie had heard the tumult of her great-grandfather's descent, and was pounding against the door of the breakfast-room in her haste to come at him. The Doctor opened it, and there she stood, a rather pale and large-eyed little thing, quaint in her aspect, as might well be the case with a motherless child, dwelling in an uncheerful house, with no other playmates than a decrepit old man and a kitten, and no better atmosphere within-doors than the odour of decayed apothecary's stuff, nor gayer neighbourhood than that of the adjacent burial-ground, where all her relatives, from her great-grandmother downward, lay calling to her, "Pansie, Pansie,

it is bed-time!" even in the prime of the summer morning. For those dead womenfolk, especially her mother and the whole row of maiden aunts and grandaunts, could not but be anxious about the child, knowing that little Pansie would be far safer under a tuft of dandelions than if left alone, as she soon must be, in this difficult and deceitful world.

Yet, in spite of the lack of damask roses in her cheeks, she seemed a healthy child, and certainly showed great capacity of energetic movement in the impulsive capers with which she welcomed her venerable progenitor. She shouted out her satisfaction, moreover, (as her custom was, having never had any over-sensitive auditors about her to tame down her voice,) till even the Doctor's dull ears were full of the clamour.

"Pansie, darling," said Dr. Dolliver cheerily, patting her brown hair with his tremulous fingers, "thou hast put some of thine own friskiness into poor old grand-

father, this fine morning! Dost know, child, that he came near breaking his neck down-stairs at the sound of thy voice? What wouldst thou have done then, little Pansie?"

"Kiss poor grandpapa and make him well!" answered the child, remembering the Doctor's own mode of cure in similar mishaps to herself. "It shall do poor grandpapa good!" she added, putting up her mouth to apply the remedy.

"Ah, little one, thou hast greater faith in thy medicines than ever I had in my drugs," replied the patriarch with a giggle, surprised and delighted at his own readiness of response. "But the kiss is good for my feeble old heart, Pansie, though it might do little to mend a broken neck; so give grandpapa another dose, and let us to breakfast."

In this merry humour they sat down to the table, great-grandpapa and Pansie side by side, and the kitten, as soon appeared, making a third in the party. First, she

showed her mottled head out of Pansie's lap, delicately sipping milk from the child's basin without rebuke; then she took post on the old gentleman's shoulder, purring like a spinning-wheel, trying her claws in the wadding of his dressing-gown, and still more impressively reminding him of her presence by putting out a paw to intercept a warmed-over morsel of yesterday's chicken on its way to the Doctor's mouth. After skilfully achieving this feat, she scrambled down upon the breakfast-table and began to wash her face and hands. Evidently, these companions were all three on intimate terms, as was natural enough, since a great many childish impulses were softly creeping back on the simple-minded old man; insomuch that, if no worldly necessities nor painful infirmity had disturbed him, his remnant of life might have been as cheaply and cheerily enjoyed as the early playtime of the kitten and the child. Old Dr. Dolliver and his great-granddaughter (a ponderous title, which seemed quite to overwhelm the tiny figure of Pansie) had met one another at the two extremities of the life-circle: her sunrise served him for a sunset, illuminating his locks of silver and hers of golden brown with a homogeneous shimmer of twinkling light.

Little Pansie was the one earthly creature that inherited a drop of the Dolliver blood. The Doctor's only child, poor Bessie's offspring, had died the better part of a hundred years before, and his grandchildren, a numerous and dimly remembered brood, had vanished along his weary track in their youth, maturity, or incipient age, till, hardly knowing how it had all happened, he found himself tottering onward with an infant's small fingers in his nerveless grasp. So mistily did his dead progeny come and go in the patriarch's decayed recollection, that this solitary child represented for him the successive babyhoods of the many that had gone before. The emotions of his early paternity came back to him. She seemed the baby of a past age oftener than

she seemed Pansie. A whole family of grandaunts, (one of whom had perished in her cradle, never so mature as Pansie now, another in her virgin bloom, another in autumnal maidenhood, yellow and shrivelled, with vinegar in her blood, and still another, a forlorn widow, whose grief outlasted even its vitality, and grew to be merely a torpid habit, and was saddest then,)-all their hitherto forgotten features peeped through the face of the great-grandchild, and their long inaudible voices sobbed, shouted, or laughed, in her familiar tones. But it often happened to Dr. Dolliver, while frolicking amid this throng of ghosts, where the one reality looked no more vivid than its shadowy sisters,—it often happened that his eyes filled with tears at a sudden perception of what a sad and povertystricken old man he was, already remote from his own generation, and bound to stray farther onward as the sole playmate and protector of a child!

As Dr. Dolliver, in spite of his advanced

epoch of life, is likely to remain a considerable time longer upon our hands, we deem it expedient to give a brief sketch of his position, in order that the story may get onward with the greater freedom when he rises from the breakfast-table. Deeming it a matter of courtesy, we have allowed him the honorary title of Doctor, as did all his townspeople and contemporaries, except, perhaps, one or two formal old physicians, stingy of civil phrases and over-jealous of their own professional dignity. Nevertheless, these crusty graduates were technically right in excluding Dr. Dolliver from their fraternity. He had never received the degree of any medical school, nor (save it might be for the cure of a toothache, or a child's rash, or a whitlow on a seamstress's finger, or some such trifling malady) had he ever been even a practitioner of the awful science with which his popular designation connected him. Our old friend, in short, even at his highest social elevation, claimed

to be nothing more than an apothecary, and, in these later and far less prosperous days, scarcely so much. Since the death of his last surviving grandson, (Pansie's father, whom he had instructed in all the mysteries of his science, and who, being distinguished by an experimental and inventive tendency, was generally believed to have poisoned himself with an infallible panacea of his own distillation,) - since that final bereavement, Dr. Dolliver's once pretty flourishing business had lamentably declined. After a few months of unavailing struggle, he found it expedient to take down the Brazen Serpent from the position to which Dr. Swinnerton had originally elevated it, in front of his shop in the main street, and to retire to his private dwelling, situated in a bye-lane and on the edge of a burialground.

This house, as well as the Brazen Serpent, some old medical books, and a drawer full of manuscripts, had come to him by the legacy of Dr. Swinnerton. The dreariness

of the locality had been of small importance to our friend in his young manhood, when he first led his fair wife over the threshold, and so long as neither of them had any kinship with the human dust that rose into little hillocks, and still kept accumulating beneath their window. But, too soon afterwards, when poor Bessie herself had gone early to rest there, it is probable that an influence from her grave may have prematurely calmed and depressed her widowed husband, taking away much of the energy from what should have been the most active portion of his life. Thus he never grew rich. His thrifty townsmen used to tell him, that, in any other man's hands, Dr. Swinnerton's Brazen Serpent (meaning, I presume, the inherited credit and good-will of that old worthy's trade) would need but ten years' time to transmute its brass into gold. In Dr. Dolliver's keeping, as we have seen, the inauspicious symbol lost the greater part of what superficial gilding it originally had. Matters

had not mended with him in more advanced life, after he had deposited a further and further portion of his heart and its affections in each successive one of a long row of kindred graves; and as he stood over the last of them, holding Pansie by the hand and looking down upon the coffin of his grandson, it is no wonder that the old man wept, partly for those gone before, but not so bitterly as for the little one that stayed behind. Why had not God taken her with the rest? And then, so hopeless as he was, so destitute of possibilities of good, his weary frame, his decrepit bones, his dried-up heart, might have crumbled into dust at once, and have been scattered by the next wind over all the heaps of earth that were akin to him.

This intensity of desolation, however, was of too positive a character to be long sustained by a person of Dr. Dolliver's original gentleness and simplicity, and now so completely tamed by age and misfortune. Even before he turned away from the

grave, he grew conscious of a slightly cheering and invigorating effect from the tight grasp of the child's warm little hand. Feeble as he was, she seemed to adopt him willingly for her protector. And the Doctor never afterwards shrank from his duty nor quailed beneath it, but bore himself like a man, striving, amid the sloth of age and the breaking-up of intellect, to earn the competency which he had failed to accumulate even in his most vigorous days.

To the extent of securing a present subsistence for Pansie and himself, he was successful. After his son's death, when the Brazen Serpent fell into popular disrepute, a small share of tenacious patronage followed the old man into his retirement. In his prime, he had been allowed to possess more skill than usually fell to the share of a Colonial apothecary, having been regularly apprenticed to Dr. Swinnerton, who, throughout his long practice, was accustomed personally to concoct the medicines

which he prescribed and dispensed. It was believed, indeed, that the ancient physician had learned the art at the world-famous drug-manufactory of Apothecaries' Hall, in London, and, as some people halfmalignly whispered, had perfected himself under masters more subtle than were to be found even there. Unquestionably, in many critical cases he was known to have employed remedies of mysterious composition and dangerous potency, which in less skilful hands would have been more likely to kill than cure. He would willingly, it is said, have taught his apprentice the secrets of these prescriptions; but the latter, being of a timid character and delicate conscience, had shrunk from acquaintance with them. It was probably as the result of the same scrupulosity that Dr. Dolliver had always declined to enter the medical profession, in which his old instructor had set him such heroic examples of adventurous dealing with matters of life and death. Nevertheless, the aromatic fragrance, so to speak, of the learned Swinnerton's reputation had clung to our friend through life; and there were elaborate preparations in the pharmacopæia of that day, requiring such minute skill and conscientious fidelity in the concocter that the physicians were still glad to confide them to one in whom these qualities were so evident.

Moreover, the grandmothers of the community were kind to him, and mindful of his perfumes, his rose-water, his cosmetics, tooth-powders, pomanders, and pomades, the scented memory of which lingered about their toilet-tables, or came faintly back from the days when they were beautiful. Among this class of customers there was still a demand for certain comfortable little nostrums, (delicately sweet and pungent to the taste, cheering to the spirits, and fragrant in the breath,) the proper distillation of which was the airiest secret that the mystic Swinnerton had left behind him. And, besides, these old ladies had always

liked the manners of Dr. Dolliver, and used to speak of his gentle courtesy behind the counter as having positively been something to admire; though, of later years, an unrefined, an almost rustic simplicity, such as belonged to his humble ancestors, appeared to have taken possession of him, as it often does of prettily mannered men in their late decay.

But it resulted from all these favourable circumstances that the Doctor's marble mortar, though worn with long service and considerably damaged by a crack that pervaded it, continued to keep up an occasional intimacy with the pestle; and he still weighed drachms and scruples in his delicate scales, though it seemed impossible, dealing with such minute quantities, that his tremulous fingers should not put in too little or too much, leaving out life with the deficiency or spilling in death with the surplus. To say the truth, his stanchest friends were beginning to think that Dr. Dolliver's fits of absence (when his mind appeared

absolutely to depart from him, while his frail old body worked on mechanically) rendered him not quite trustworthy without a close supervision of his proceedings. It was impossible, however, to convince the aged apothecary of the necessity for such vigilance; and if anything could stir up his gentle temper to wrath, or, as oftener happened, to tears, it was the attempt (which he was marvellously quick to detect) thus to interfere with his long-familiar business.

The public, meanwhile, ceasing to regard Dr. Dolliver in his professional aspect, had begun to take an interest in him as perhaps their oldest fellow-citizen. It was he that remembered the Great Fire and the Great Snow, and that had been a grown-up stripling at the terrible epoch of Witch-Times, and a child just breeched at the breaking-out of King Philip's Indian War. He, too, in his school-boy days, had received a benediction from the patriarchal Governor Bradstreet, and thus could boast (somewhat

as Bishops do of their unbroken succession from the Apostles) of a transmitted blessing from the whole company of sainted pilgrims, among whom the venerable magistrate had been an honoured companion. Viewing their townsman in this aspect, the people revoked the courteous doctorate with which they had heretofore decorated him, and now knew him most familiarly as Grandsir Dolliver. His white head, his Puritan band, his threadbare garb, (the fashion of which he had ceased to change, half a century ago,) his gold-headed staff, that had been Dr. Swinnerton's, his shrunken, frosty figure, and its feeble movement, all these characteristics had a wholeness and permanence in the public recognition, like the meeting-house steeple or the town-pump. All the younger portion of the inhabitants unconsciously ascribed a sort of aged immortality to Grandsir Dolliver's infirm and reverend presence. They fancied that he had been born old, (at least I remember entertaining some such notions about agestricken people, when I myself was young,) and that he could the better tolerate his aches and incommodities, his dull ears and dim eyes, his remoteness from human intercourse within the crust of indurated years, the cold temperature that kept him always shivering and sad, the heavy burden that invisibly bent down his shoulders—that all these intolerable things might bring a kind of enjoyment to Grandsir Dolliver, as the life-long conditions of his peculiar existence.

But, alas! it was a terrible mistake. This weight of years had a perennial novelty for the poor sufferer. He never grew accustomed to it, but, long as he had now borne the fretful torpor of his waning life, and patient as he seemed, he still retained an inward consciousness that these stiffened shoulders, these quailing knees, this cloudiness of sight and brain, this confused forgetfulness of men and affairs, were troublesome accidents that did not really belong to him. He possibly cherished a half-recog-

nised idea that they might pass away. Youth, however eclipsed for a season, is undoubtedly the proper, permanent, and genuine condition of man; and if we look closely into this dreary delusion of growing old, we shall find that it never absolutely succeeds in laying hold of our innermost convictions. A sombre garment, woven of life's unrealities, has muffled us from our true self, but within it smiles the young man whom we knew; the ashes of many perishable things have fallen upon our youthful fire, but beneath them lurk the seeds of inextinguishable flame. So powerful is this instinctive faith that men of simple modes of character are prone to antedate its consummation. And thus it happened with poor Grandsir Dolliver, who often awoke from an old man's fitful sleep with a sense that his senile predicament was but a dream of the past night; and hobbling hastily across the cold floor to the lookingglass, he would be grievously disappointed at beholding the white hair, the wrinkles

and furrows, the ashen visage and bent form, the melancholy mask of Age, in which, as he now remembered, some strange and sad enchantment had involved him for years gone by!

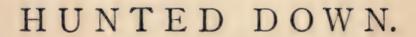
To other eyes than his own, however, the shrivelled old gentleman looked as if there were little hope of his throwing off this too artfully wrought disguise, until, at no distant day, his stooping figure should be straightened out, his hoary locks be smoothed over his brows, and his muchenduring bones be laid safely away, with a green coverlet spread over them, beside his Bessie, who doubtless would recognise her youthful companion in spite of his ugly garniture of decay. He longed to be gazed at by the loving eyes now closed; he shrank from the hard stare of them that loved him not. Walking the streets seldom and reluctantly, he felt a dreary impulse to elude the people's observation, as if with a sense that he had gone irrevocably out of fashion, and broken his connecting links with the net-

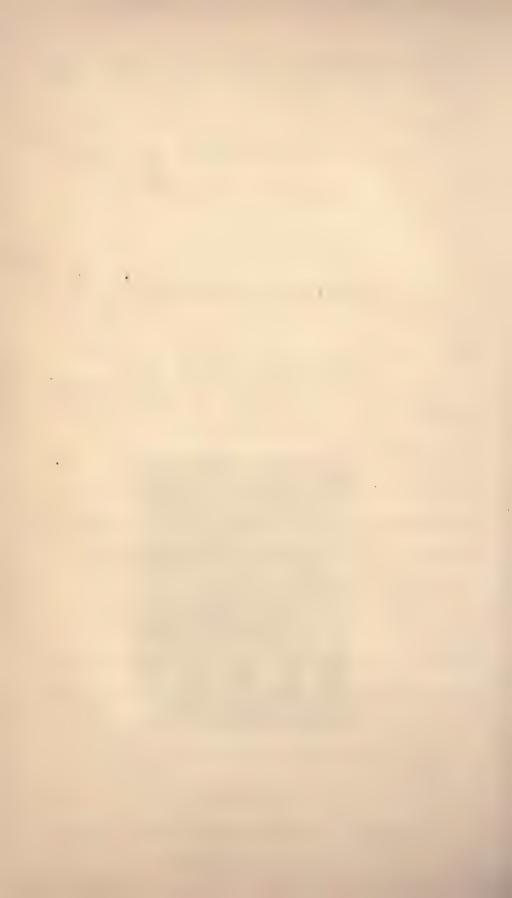
work of human life; or else it was that nightmare-feeling which we sometimes have in dreams, when we seem to find ourselves wandering through a crowded avenue, with the noonday sun upon us, in some wild extravagance of dress or nudity. He was conscious of estrangement from his townspeople, but did not always know how nor wherefore, nor why he should be thus groping through the twilight mist in solitude. If they spoke loudly to him, with cheery voices, the greeting translated itself faintly and mournfully to his ears; if they shook him by the hand, it was as if a thick, insensible glove absorbed the kindly pressure and the warmth. When little Pansie was the companion of his walk, her childish gaiety and freedom did not avail to bring him into closer relationship with men, but seemed to follow him into that region of indefinable remoteness, that dismal Fairyland of aged fancy, into which old Grandsir Dolliver had so strangely crept away.

Yet there were moments, as many persons

had noticed, when the great-grandpapawould suddenly take stronger hues of life. It was as if his faded figure had been coloured over anew, or at least, as he and Pansie moved along the street, as if a sunbeam had fallen across him, instead of the grey gloom of an instant before. His chilled sensibilities had probably been touched and quickened by the warm contiguity of his little companion through the medium of her hand, as it stirred within his own, or some inflection of her voice that set his memory ringing and chiming with forgotten sounds. While that music lasted, the old man was alive and happy. And there were seasons, it might be, happier than even these, when Pansie had been kissed and put to bed, and Grandsir Dolliver sat by his fireside, gazing in among the massive coals, and absorbing their glow into those cavernous abysses with which all men communicate. Hence come angels or fiends into our twilight musings, according as we may have peopled them in bygone years. Over our friend's

face, in the rosy flicker of the fire-gleam, stole an expression of repose and perfect trust that made him as beautiful to look at, in his high-backed chair, as the child Pansie on her pillow; and sometimes the spirits that were watching him beheld a calm surprise draw slowly over his features and brighten into joy, yet not so vividly as to break his evening quietude. The gate of heaven had been kindly left ajar, that this forlorn old creature might catch a glimpse within. All the night afterwards, he would be semi-conscious of an intangible bliss diffused through the fitful lapses of an old man's slumber, and would awake, at early dawn, with a faint thrilling of the heartstrings, as if there had been music just now wandering over them.





INTRODUCTION.

WAINEWRIGHT, THE POISONER.

The fact that two great novelists of our time—Charles Dickens, in his story of "Hunted Down,"* and Lord Lytton, in his powerful novel "Lucretia"—should have both seized upon the career of Thomas Griffiths Wainewright as a foundation for their fictions, is a sufficient apology, we trust, for the following short sketch of this scoundrel's career.

It is difficult for the mind to associate such a man with the gentle *Elia*—with Charles Lamb, Allan Cunningham, De Quincey, and the other

^{*} Dickens had seen Wainewright in Newgate, after sentence had been passed upon him. The great novelist was paying a visit of inspection, in company with his friends "Barry Cornwall" and W. Macready the tragedian. Barry Cornwall was not a little taken aback when he recognised in Wainewright a fellow-contributor to the London Magazine.

fine spirits whose contributions made the London the best magazine of its time. Messrs. Taylor and Hessey, the publishers, after the good old fashion of those days, used to assemble the writers upon the London around their hospitable table in Fleet Street, and among the guests was Wainewright. This is Talfourd's description of him: -- "He was then a young man, on the bright side of thirty, with a sort of undress military air, and the conversation of a smart, lively, clever, heartless, voluptuous coxcomb. It was whispered that he had been an officer in the Dragoons; had spent more than one fortune; and he now condescended to take a part in periodical literature, with the careless grace of an amateur who felt himself above it. He was an artist also; sketched boldly and graphically; exhibited a portfolio of his own drawings of female beauty, in which the voluptuous trembled on the borders of the indelicate; and seized on the critical department of the Fine Arts, both in and out of the magazine, undisturbed by the presence or pretentions of the finest critic on Art who ever wrote -William Hazlitt. On this subject, he composed for the magazine, under the signature of 'Ianus Weathercock,' articles of flashy assumption, in which disdainful notices of living artists were set off by fascinating references to the personal appearance, accomplishments, and luxurious appliances of the writer, ever the first hero of his essay. He created a new sensation in the sedate circle, not only by his braided surtouts, jewelled fingers, and various neckkerchiefs, but by ostentatious contempt for everything in the world but elegant enjoyment. Lamb, who delighted to find sympathy in dissimilitude, fancied that he really liked him; took, as he ever did, the genial side of character; and instead of disliking the rake in the critic, thought it pleasant to detect so much taste and good nature in a fashionable roué; and regarded all his vapid gaiety, which to severer observers looked liked impertinence, as the playful effusion of a remarkably guileless nature. We lost sight of him," remarks Talfourd, "when the career of the London Magazine ended; and Lamb did not live to learn the sequel of his history."

There are those still living who remember Wainewright's dinner parties and literary reunions. It was at his sumptuously furnished apartments in Great Marlborough Street, where he resided for a short time, that poor Clare the poet was once asked to meet several celebrities at dinner. Among those present, if we remember rightly, were Mr. John Forster, the late Mr. Dilke, Dr. Maginn, Serjeant Talfourd, and many other distinguished men of letters. Now an odd story is told of the poet's invitation to this party. Clare never fell a victim to Bond Street tailors; the fashion-book was not a work of interest to him; and he appeared at the appointed hour in his Northamptonshire fustian and roughdried shirt. Just as he was entering the door a grand footman was carrying up a large dish, and observing what he supposed to be a country servant coming with a message for one of the guests above, he nodded for the man to take a seat inside the door.

In the meantime the repast was proceeding upstairs. The host was fascinating in the extreme, and the choicest of good things and rare wines were being duly appreciated by the visitors, but everybody wondered where Clare had got to. At length a friend of the poet, thinking that perhaps Clare had forgotten the number of the house, described his personal appearance to a footman, and bid him look out into the street.

"Why there's a countryman been sitting in the hall this half hour," responded the gentleman in silk stockings and powdered hair.

Sure enough, upon looking over the bannisters there was Clare sitting on a form by the door, and holding his hat before him with both hands.

The puzzled astonishment of the great footman at seeing the hob-nailed countryman triumphantly escorted upstairs, and installed in the seat of honour, caused great diversion amongst the guests; and it is remembered how entirely devoted were the attentions of that footman to Clare during the remainder of the evening. The servant was completely awed. The fact of fustian and corduroys, accompanied by a strong Midland accent, finding a seat on the satin damask of the drawing-room of his exquisitely scented and lisping master, staggered all his previous experiences of life!

But we will proceed with the story of Wainewright's subsequent career.

It is now some five-and-thirty years since that two young and attractive-looking ladies were in the habit of visiting various Insurance Offices, to effect an insurance on the life of the younger and unmarried one. Behind the curtain was Charles Lamb's "kind, light-hearted Janus Weathercock." This man, an artist, a littérateur, the admired of his circle, was dogged in his footsteps by death. It was death to stand in his path—it was death to be his friend—it was death to occupy the very house with him. He inherited

a large fortune from his uncle, which he soon expended.

This uncle was "a Dr. Griffiths, a comfortable, well-to-do man, who had for many years edited a monthly publication. His death occurred after a very short illness, and during a visit paid him by Wainewright and his wife, who was there confined of her first, and, as it proved, her only child. It was not exactly apoplexy, nor was it heart disease; but then even doctors are sometimes puzzled by organic complications. One thing is certain, it was mortal, and Dr. Griffiths died under proper medical care, and watched by the most affectionate of relatives."

Linden House, at Turnham Green, came into Wainewright's possession at the death of this old gentleman. Greater extravagances than ever now ensued. A further supply of money was needed, and Helen Frances Phœbe and her sister Madeline, step-sisters to his wife, came to reside with him. The first visit of the ladies was to the Palladium, where a policy was effected on the life of Miss Helen, a buxom,

handsome girl of twenty-one, for 3000l. for three years only. Another insurance was immediately afterwards effected in another office, for 3000l. for two years only. The Provident, Pelican, Hope, and Imperial were similarly visited, and like sums for two years secured.

In a few months 18,000l. was assured, but this did not satisfy the kind-hearted brother-inlaw: 2000/. was proposed to the Eagle, 5000/. to the Globe, and 5000l. to the Alliance; but they had become cautious. At the Globe the young lady could not tell why she was insured, and added a palpable falsehood, that she was not insured in any other office. At the Alliance the secretary put several searching questions to her, and mentioned the case of a young lady who had met with a violent death for the sake of her insurance money. Her reply was, that no one was likely to murder her for the sake of her money; but no more insurances were effected. Before these insurances had been taken, we ought to have mentioned that another death had occurred in

the house at Turnham Green. Linden House must have been a peculiarly unhealthy place, for not very long after Dr. Griffiths' decease, Mrs. Abercrombie, Wainewright's wife's mother, died there also, after a very short illness: something in the brain or heart, probably.

Wainewright's affairs now waxed desperate, and the man became familiar with crime. Some Stock was vested in the Bank of England in the name of trustees, the interest only of which was receivable by himself and his wife. He forged the name of the trustees to a power of attorney, obtained the principal, and followed up his success by five similar forgeries. The money was soon spent, the very furniture of the house was pledged, and Wainewright came to town, and took lodgings in Conduit Street, at No. 12, over Nicoll's, the tailors, for himself, his wife, and sisters-in-law.

The sister made over her property in favour of Madeline, appointing Wainewright sole executor, upon the plea that she was going abroad, and it is supposed from this that it was his

intention, by means of forged documents, to treat the offices to a fraudulent instead of real death. The tragic drama had, however, a different termination. On the night after the assignment of her policies she went with her sister and brother-in-law to the theatre. The evening proved wet, but they walked home and had lobsters or oysters and porter for supper. That night she was taken ill. Dr. Locock attended her; it is needless to say she died after taking a powder which Dr. Locock did not remember prescribing. Mr. and Mrs. Wainewright went for a long walk, and when they returned found her dead.

He was now in a position to demand 18,000%. of the offices, but the claim was resisted until he had shown an insurable interest, and he left England. In 1835 he commenced an action against the Imperial; the defence was deception, but the counsel went further, and so fearful were the allegations on which he rested his defence, that the jury were 'almost petrified, and the judge shrunk aghast from the implicated crime.

The jury could not agree; there was another trial, and the Company obtained a verdict; and the forgery on the Bank having been discovered, Wainewright left England for France.

At Boulogne he resided with an English officer, and insured his life in the Pelican for 5000l. The officer died a few months afterwards; and Wainewright having been apprehended in Paris by the French police, and the fearful poison known as strychnine being found in his possession, he was imprisoned for six months. After his release he ventured to London, intending to remain only for a day. In his hotel at Covent Garden, he drew down the blinds, and fancied himself safe, but for one fatal moment he forgot his habitual craft. A noise in the street attracted him-he went to the window and lifted the blind. At that very moment a person passing caught a glimpse of his countenance, and exclaimed, "That's Wainewright, the Bank forger." He was immediately apprehended, and on July 5th, 1837 (seven years after the death of Miss Abercrombie),

THE POISONER was tried at the Central Criminal Court for forging certain powers of attorney to sell out 2259l. worth of Bank Stock, which had been settled on him and his wife at their marriage. The prisoner was then about forty years of age, and he is described in the newspapers of the day, as being "a man of gentlemanly appearance, wearing moustachios."

Forgery was in those days a capital offence, but public feeling was so adverse to hanging—except in the case of murder—that the Bank authorities did not press for the extreme penalty of the law, and Wainewright entered the plea of "Not Guilty." Eventually, by the advice of his lawyer, he pleaded "Guilty" to two of the minor indictments out of the five, and was thereupon only transported for life.

Directly the insurance offices learnt that Wainewright was under sentence of transportation for life, they opened negotiations with him, hoping to elicit some information from him that would benefit them. Wainewright knew well enough he was now legally non-existent, and

there was no difficulty in coming to terms with him.

"At this time," says a writer in All the Year Round, "he was confined in Newgate (modern prison discipline had not then found its way into that jail) in a cell with a bricklayer and a sweep: in which polite company he was actually recognised, through a strange chance, by Mr. Procter and Mr. Macready, visiting the prison with the Conductor of this Journal. When the agent of the insurance offices had extracted from the ruffian all that he wanted to know, that gentleman said, in conclusion: 'It would be quite useless, Mr. Wainewright, to speak to you of humanity, or tenderness, or laws human or Divine; but does it not occur to you, after all, that, merely regarded as a speculation, Crime is a bad one? See where it ends. I talk to you in a shameful prison, and I talk to a degraded convict.' Wainewright returned, twirling his moustache: 'Sir, you City men enter on your speculations, and take the chances of them. Some of your speculations succeed, some fail.

Mine happen to have failed; yours happen to have succeeded; that is the difference, sir, between my visitor and me. But I'll tell you one thing in which I have succeeded to the last. I have been determined through life to hold the position of a gentleman. I have always done so. I do so still. It is the custom of this place that each of the inmates of a cell shall take his morning's turn of sweeping it out. I occupy a cell with a bricklayer and a sweep. But by G— they never offer me the broom!"

At another time some one asked him how he could have been so heartless as to murder a loving, trusting young girl like Miss Phœbe Abercrombie. "I scarcely know myself," replied he, with a yawn and a sneer, "unless it was that her legs were too thick."

Like many other educated villains, Wainewright was particular in keeping a diary, and this record of premeditated guilt the insurance offices captured by a very bold but clever manœuvre. After his trial in London they sent an agent to his lodgings in Paris, paid his rather long bill, and cleared away everything that belonged to him, including his papers and the diary. It is said that this MS. afforded an index to all the crimes he had been guilty of, and that the entries of the effects his experiments had upon the victims were set forth with "a voluptuous cruelty and a loathsome exultation worthy of the diseased vanity of such a masterpiece of evil."

"In the meantime," says Mr. Talfourd, in his version of the affair, quoting from the previous writer, "proceedings were taken on behalf of Miss Abercrombie's sister by her husband, Mr. Wheatley, to render the insurances available for her benefit, which induced the prisoner to revengefully offer communications to the insurance offices which might defeat a purpose entirely foreign to his own, and which he hoped might procure him, through their intercession, a mitigation of the more painful severities incident to his sentence. In this expectation he was miserably disappointed; for though, in pursuance of their promise, the directors of one of the offices made a communication to the Secretary

of State for the Home Department, the result, instead of a mitigation, was an order to place him in irons, and to send him to his place of punishment in the *Susan*, a vessel about to convey three hundred convicts.

"In Newgate, the gay-hearted creature was sublime. He asserted himself as a poet, a philosopher, and a martyr. He claimed for himself 'a soul whose nutriment is love, and its offspring art, music, divine song, and still holier philosophy.' When writing even from the hold of the convict-ship to complain of his being placed in irons, he said: 'They think me a desperado. Me! the companion of poets, philosophers, artists, and musicians, a desperado! You will smile at this. No—I think you will feel for the man, educated and reared as a gentleman, now the mate of vulgar ruffians and country bumpkins.'

"In 1842, the dandy convict was admitted as in-patient of the General Hospital in Hobart Town, where he remained some years. Whilst an inmate of the hospital he forwarded to the

governor, Sir Eardley E. Wilmot, the following memorial. It is too characteristic of the man not to be given. The gilt had all gone now. The Governor's minute on the memorial is very laconic:—'A T. L. (ticket-of-leave) would be contrary to Act of Parlt. T. L. refused. 3rd class wages received?—E. E. W.'

- "'To His Excellency Sir John Eardley Wilmot, Bart., Lieut.-Governor of Van Diemen's Land, &c. &c.
- "'The humble petition of T. Griffiths Wainewright, praying the indulgence of a ticket-of-leave.

"'To palliate the boldness of this application he offers the statement ensuing. That seven years past he was arrested on a charge of forging and acting on a power of attorney to sell Stock thirteen years previous. Of which (though looking for little credence) he avers his entire innocence. He admits a knowledge of the actual committer, gained though some years after the fact. Such, however, were their relative posi-

tions, that to have disclosed it would have made him infamous where any human feeling is manifest. Nevertheless, by his counsel's direction, he entered the plea Nor Guilty, to allow him to adduce the 'circonstance attenuante'-viz., that the money (52001.) appropriated was, without quibble, his own, derived from his parents. An hour before his appearing to plead he was trepanned (through the just but deluded Governor of Newgate) into withdrawing his plea, by a promise, in such case, of a punishment merely nominal. The same purporting to issue from ye Bank Parlour, but in fact from the agents of certain Insurance Companies interested to a heavy amount (16,000%) in compassing his legal non-existence. He pleaded guilty—and was forthwith hurried, stunned with such ruthless perfidy, to the hulks at Portsmouth, and thence in five days aboard the Susan, sentenced to Life in a land (to him) a moral sepulchre. As a ground for your mercy he submits with great deference his foregone condition of life during forty-three years of freedom. A descent,

deduced, through family tradition and Edmondson's Heraldry, from a stock not the least honoured in Cambria. Nurtured with all appliances of ease and comfort—schooled by his relative, the well-known philologer and bibliomaniac, Chas. Burney, D.D., brother to Mdme. D'Arblay, and the companion of Cooke. Lastly. such a modest competence as afforded the mental necessaries of Literature, Archæology, Music, and the Plastic Arts; while his pen and brush introduced him to the notice and friendship of men whose fame is European. The Catalogues of Somerset House Exhibitions, the Literary Pocket-Book, indicate his earlier pursuits, and the MSS. left behind in Paris, attest at least his industry. Their titles imply the objects to which he has, to this date, directed all his energies: - 'A Philosophical Theory of Design, as concerned with the Loftier Emotions, showing its deep action on Society, drawn from the Phidean-Greek and early Florentine Schools' (the result of seventeen years' study), illustrated with numerous plates, executed with conscien-

tious accuracy, in one vol. atlas folio. 'An Æsthetic and Psychological Treatise on the Beautiful; or the Analogies of Imagination and Fancy, as exerted in Poësy, whether Verse, Painting, Sculpture, Music, or Architecture;' to form four vols. folio, with a profusion of engravings by the first artists of Paris, Munich, Berlin, Dresden, and Wien. 'An Art-Novel,' in three vols., and a collection of 'Fantasie, Critical Sketches, &c., selected partly from Blackwood, the Foreign Review, and the London Magazine.' All these were nearly ready for, one actually at press. Deign, your Excellency! to figure to yourself my actual condition during seven years; without friends, good name (the breath of life), or art (the fuel to it with me), tormented at once by memory and ideas struggling for outward form and realization, barred up from increase of knowledge, and deprived of the exercise of profitable or even decorous speech. Take pity, your Excellency! and grant me the power to shelter my eyes from Vice in her most revolting and sordid phase, and my ears from a jargon of

filth and blasphemy that would outrage the cynism (sic) of Parny himself. Perhaps this clinging to the lees of a vapid life may seem as base, unmanly, arguing rather a plebeian, than a liberal and gentle descent. But, your Excellency! the wretched Exile has a child!—and Vanity (sprung from the praise of Flaxman, Charles Lamb, Stothard, Rd. Westall, Delaroche, Cornelius, Lawrence, and the god of his worship, Fuseli) whispers that the follower of the Ideal might even yet achieve another reputation than that of a Faussaire. Seven years of steady demeanour may in some degree promise that no indulgence shall ever be abused by your Excellency's miserable petitioner,

"'T. G. WAINEWRIGHT."

The petition is wonderfully characteristic of the man, and might almost pass—less a few allusions to the writer's position—for one of the flashy articles of Janus Weathercock in the London Magazine.

Sent out of the hospital as being well enough

to earn his own living, he then started as an artist in Hobart Town. He took likenesses and made sketches; but earned the respect of no one. He was insincere and dandyfied to his male customers, and rude—not to say indelicate—to any ladies who chanced to pay him a visit. In the Melbourne Argus of 6th July, 1841, there is a long account of him, and other celebrated criminals then living in Van Diemen's Land. The writer describes Wainewright in these plain terms:—"He rarely looked you in the face. His conversation and manners were winning in the extreme; he was never intemperate, but nevertheless of grossly sensual habit, and an opium-eater. As to moral character, he was a man of the very lowest stamp. He seemed to be possessed by an ingrained malignity of disposition, which kept him constantly on the very confines of murder, and he took a perverse pleasure in traducing persons who had befriended him. There is a terrible story told of his savage malignity towards a fellow-patient in the hospital, a convict, against whom he bore

a grudge. The man was in a state of collapse—his extremities were already growing cold. Death had him by the throat. Wainewright's snakish eyes kindled with unearthly fire. He saw at once the fatal sign. He stole softly as a cat to the man's pallet, and hissed his exultation into his dying ear:

"'You are a dead man, you—. In fourand-twenty hours your soul will be in hell, and my arms will be up to that (touching his elbow) in your body, dissecting you."

It is said that on two occasions he attempted to poison fellow-convicts who had displeased him in some way. Amongst all the prisoners who were his compulsory companions he was without a single friend. No living tie remained to him but a cat, upon whom he lavished all his attention and care. To this animal alone was he true. When he lived at Turnham Green, and in London, a cat was his favourite.

The end of this monster was in keeping with his tragic career. He was smitten down in an instant by apoplexy, in 1852—just fifteen years after sentence had been passed upon him.

The words of the late Sir Thomas Noon-Talfourd will fittingly close this short sketch of Wainewright the Poisoner:—

"Surely no contrast presented in the wildest romance between a gay cavalier, fascinating Naples or Palermo, and the same hero detected as the bandit or demon of the forest, equals that which time has unveiled between what Mr. Wainewright seemed and what he was."

J. C. H.

PICCADILLY.

Notice.—It should be stated that the late Mr. Charles Dickens wrote the following powerful story for a foreign newspaper proprietor, who gave him a thousand guineas for his labour. It is not included in any English edition of the great novelist's works.

HUNTED DOWN.

BY

CHARLES DICKENS.



HUNTED DOWN.

I.

MOST of us see some romances in life. In my capacity as Chief Manager of a Life Assurance Office, I think I have within the last thirty years seen more romances than the generality of men; however unpromising the opportunity may, at first sight, seem.

As I have retired, and live at my ease, I possess the means that I used to want, of considering what I have seen, at leisure. My experiences have a more remarkable aspect, so reviewed, than they had when they were in pro-

gress. I have come home from the Play now, and can recall the scenes of the Drama upon which the curtain has fallen, free from the glare, bewilderment, and bustle, of the Theatre.

Let me recall one of these Romances of the real world.

There is nothing truer than physiognomy, taken in connexion with manner. The art of reading that book of which Eternal Wisdom obliges every human creature to present his or her own page with the individual character written on it, is a difficult one, perhaps, and is little studied. It may require some natural aptitude, and it must require (for everything does), some patience and some pains. That, these are not usually given to it—that, numbers of people accept a few stock commonplace expressions of face as the whole list of characteristics, and neither seek nor know the refinements that are

truest—that You, for instance, give a great deal of time and attention to the reading of music, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Hebrew if you please, and do not qualify yourself to read the face of the master or mistress looking over your shoulder teaching it to you—I assume to be five hundred times more probable than improbable. Perhaps, a little self-sufficiency may be at the bottom of this; facial expression requires no study from you, you think; it comes by nature to you to know enough about it, and you are not to be taken in.

I confess, for my part, that I have been taken in, over and over and over again. I have been taken in by acquaintances, and I have been taken in (of course) by friends; far oftener by friends than by any other class of persons. How came I to be so deceived? Had I quite mis-read their faces?

No. Believe me, my first impression of those

people, founded on face and manner alone, was invariably true. My mistake was, in suffering them to come nearer to me and explain themselves away.

II.

The partition which separated my own office from our general outer office in the City, was of thick plate-glass. I could see through it what passed in the outer office, without hearing a word. I had it put up in place of a wall that had been there for years—ever since the house was built. It was no matter whether I did or did not make the change, in order that I might derive my first impression of strangers who came to us on business, from their faces alone, without being influenced by anything they said. Enough to mention that I turned my glass partition to that account, and that a Life Assurance' Office is at all times exposed to be practised upon by the most crafty and cruel of the human race.

It was through my glass partition that I first saw the gentleman whose story I am going to tell.

He had come in, without my observing it, and had put his hat and umbrella on the broad counter, and was bending over it to take some papers from one of the clerks. He was about forty cr so, dark, exceedingly well dressed in blackbeing in mourning—and the hand he extended with a polite air, had a particularly well-fitting, black kid glove upon it. His hair, which was elaborately brushed and oiled, was parted straight up the middle; and he presented this parting to the clerk, exactly (to my thinking) as if he had said in so many words: "You must take me, if you please, my friend, just as I show myself. Come straight up here, follow the gravel path, keep off the grass, I allow no trespassing."

I conceived a very great aversion to that man, the moment I thus saw him.

He had asked for some of our printed forms, and the clerk was giving them to him and explaining them. An obliged and agreeable smile was on his face, and his eyes met those of the clerk with a sprightly look. (I have known a vast quantity of nonsense talked about bad men not looking you in the face. Don't trust that conventional idea. Dishonesty will stare honesty out of countenance, any day in the week, if there is anything to be got by it.)

I saw, in the corner of his eyelash, that he became aware of my looking at him. Immediately, he turned the parting in his hair toward the glass partition, as if he said to me, with a sweet smile: "Straight up here, if you please. Off the grass!"

In a few moments he had put on his hat and taken up his umbrella, and was gone.

I beckoned the clerk into my room, and asked, "Who was that?"

He had the gentleman's card in his hand.
"Mr. Julius Slinkton, Middle Temple."

"A barrister, Mr. Adams?"

"I think not, sir."

"I should have thought him a clergyman, but for his having no Reverend here," said I.

"Probably, from his appearance," Mr. Adams replied, "he is reading for orders."

I should mention that he wore a dainty white cravat, and dainty linen altogether.

"What did he want, Mr. Adams?"

"Merely a form of proposal, sir, and form of reference."

"Recommended here? Did he say?"

"Yes, he said he was recommended here by a friend of yours. He noticed you, but said that as he had not the pleasure of your personal acquaintance he would not trouble you."

"Did he know my name?"

"Oh, yes, sir! He said, 'There is Mr. Sampson, I see!"

"A well-spoken gentleman, apparently?"

"Remarkably so, sir."

- "Insinuating manners, apparently?"
- "Very much so, indeed, sir."
- "Hah!" said I. "I want nothing at present, Mr. Adams."

Within a fortnight of that day, I went to dine with a friend of mine, a merchant, a man of taste, who buys pictures and books; and the first man I saw among the company was Mr. Julius Slinkton. There he was, standing before the fire, with good large eyes and an open expression of face; but still (I thought) requiring everybody to come at him by the prepared way he offered, and by no other.

I noticed him ask my friend to introduce him to Mr. Sampson, and my friend did so. Mr. Slinkton was very happy to see me. Not too happy; there was no overdoing of the matter; happy in a thoroughly well-bred, perfectly unmeaning, way.

[&]quot;I thought you had met?" our host observed.

"No," said Mr. Slinkton. "I did look in at Mr. Sampson's office, on your recommendation; but I really did not feel justified in troubling Mr. Sampson himself, on a point in the every-day routine of an ordinary clerk."

I said I should have been glad to show him any attention on our friend's introduction.

"I am sure of that," said he, " and am much obliged. At another time, perhaps, I may be less delicate. Only, however, if I have real business; for I know, Mr. Sampson, how precious business time is, and what a vast number of impertinent people there are in the world."

I acknowledged his consideration with a bow. "You were thinking," said I, "of effecting a policy on your life?"

"Oh dear, no! I am afraid I am not so prudent as you pay me the compliment of supposing me to be, Mr. Sampson. I merely inquired for a friend. But, you know what friends are in

such matters. Nothing may ever come of it. I have the greatest reluctance to trouble men of business with inquiries for friends, knowing the probabilities to be a thousand to one that the friends will never follow them up. People are so fickle, so selfish, so inconsiderate. Don't you, in your business, find them so every day, Mr. Sampson?"

I was going to give a qualified answer; but, he turned his smooth, white parting on me with its "Straight up here, if you please!" and I answered "Yes."

"I hear, Mr. Sampson," he resumed, presently, for our friend had a new cook, and dinner was not so punctual as usual, "that your profession has recently suffered a great loss."

"In money!" said I.

He laughed at my ready association of loss of money, and replied, "No, in talent and vigour."

Not at once following out his resolution, I

considered for a moment. "Has it sustained a loss of that kind?" said I. "I was not aware of it."

"Understand me, Mr. Sampson. I don't imagine that you have retired. It is not so bad as that. But Mr. Meltham—"

"Oh, to be sure!" said I. "Yes! Mr. Meltham, the young actuary of the 'Inestimable."

"Just so," he returned, in a consoling way.

"He is a great loss. He was at once the most profound, the most original, and the most energetic man, I have ever known connected with Life Assurance."

I spoke strongly; for I had a high esteem and admiration for Meltham, and my gentleman had indefinitely conveyed to me some suspicion that he wanted to sneer at him. He recalled me to my guard by presenting that trim pathway up his head, with its infernal, "Not on the grass, if you please—the gravel."

"You knew him, Mr. Slinkton?"

"Only by reputation. To have known him as an acquaintance, or as a friend, is an honour I should have sought if he had remained in society, though I might never have had the good fortune to attain it, being a man of far inferior mark. He was scarcely above thirty, I suppose?"

"About thirty."

"Ah!" He sighed in his former consoling way. "What creatures we are! To break up, Mr. Sampson, and become incapable of business at that time of life! Any reason assigned for the melancholy fact?"

("Humph!" thought I, as I looked at him.

"But I wont go up the track, and I will go on the grass.")

"What reason have you heard assigned, Mr. Slinkton?" I asked, point blank.

"Most likely a false one. You know what

Rumour is, Mr. Sampson. I never repeat what I hear; it is the only way of paring the nails and shaving the head of Rumour. But, when you ask me what reason I have heard assigned for Mr. Meltham's passing away from among men, it is another thing. I am not gratifying idle gossip then. I was told, Mr. Sampson, that Mr Meltham had relinquished all his avocations, and all his prospects, because he was, in fact, broken hearted. A disappointed attachment I heard—though it hardly seems probable, in the case of a man so distinguished and so attractive."

"Attractions and distinctions are no armour against death," said I.

"Oh! she died? Pray, pardon me. I did not hear that. That, indeed, makes it very, very sad. Poor Mr. Meltham! She died? Ah, dear me! Lamentable, lamentable!"

I still thought his pity was not quite genuine, and I still suspected an unaccountable sneer under all this, until he said, as we were parted, like the other knots of talkers, by the announcement of dinner—

"Mr. Sampson, you are surprised to see me so moved, on behalf of a man whom I have never known. I am not so disinterested as you may suppose. I have suffered, and recently too, from death myself. I have lost one of two charming nieces, who were my constant companions. She died young—barely three-and-twenty—and even her remaining sister is far from strong. The world is a grave!"

He said this with deep feeling, and I felt reproached for the coldness of my manner. Coldness and distrust had been engendered in me, I knew, by my bad experiences; they were not natural to me; and I often thought how much I had lost in life, losing trustfulness, and how little I had gained, gaining hard caution. This state of mind being habitual to me, I troubled myself

more about this conversation than I might have troubled myself about a greater matter. I listened to his talk at dinner, and observed how readily other men responded to it, and with a graceful instinct he adapted his subjects to the knowledge and habits of those he talked with. As, in talking with me, he had easily started the subject I might be supposed to understand best, and to be the most interested in, so, in talking with others, he guided himself by the same rule. The company was of a varied character; but, he was not at fault, that I could discover, with any member of it. He knew just as much of each man's pursuit as made him agreeable to that man in reference to it, and just as little as made it natural in him to seek modestly for information when the theme was broached.

As he talked and talked—but really not too much, for the rest of us seemed to force it upon him—I became quite angry with myself. I

took his face to pieces in my mind, like a watch, and examined it in detail. I could not say much against any of his features separately; I could say even less against them when they were put together. "Then is it not monstrous," I asked myself, "that because a man happens to part his hair straight up the middle of his head, I should permit myself to suspect, and even to detest, him?"

(I may stop to remark that this was no proof of my sense. An observer of men who finds himself steadily repelled by some apparently trifling thing in a stranger, is right to give it great weight. It may be the clue to the whole mystery. A hair or two will show where a lion is hidden. A very little key will open a very heavy door.)

I took my part in the conversation with him after a time, and we got on remarkably well. In the drawing-room I asked the host how long he

had known Mr. Slinkton? He answered, not many months; he had met him at the house of a celebrated painter then present, who had known him well when he was travelling with his nieces in Italy for their health. His plans in life being broken by the death of one of them, he was reading, with the intention of going back to college as a matter of form, taking his degree, and going into orders. I could not but argue with myself that here was the true explanation of his interest in poor Meltham, and that I had been almost brutal in my distrust on that simple head.

III.

On the very next day but one, I was sitting behind my glass partition, as before, when he came into the outer office as before. The moment I saw him again without hearing him, I hated him worse than ever.

It was only for a moment that I had this opportunity, for he waved his tight-fitting black glove the instant I looked at him, and came straight in.

"Mr. Sampson, good day! I presume, you see, upon your kind permission to intrude upon you. I don't keep my word in being justified by business, for my business here—if I may so abuse the word—is of the slightest nature."

I asked, was it anything I could assist him in?

"I thank you, no. I merely called to inquire outside, whether my dilatory friend had been so false to himself, as to be practical and sensible.

But of course he has done nothing. I gave him your papers with my own hand, and he was hot upon the intention, but of course he has done nothing. Apart from the general human disinclination to do anything that ought to be done, I dare say there is a speciality about assuring one's life? You find it like will-making? People are so superstitious, and take it for granted they will die soon afterward?"

Up here, if you please; straight up here, Mr. Sampson. Neither to the right nor to the left! I almost fancied I could hear him breathe the words as he sat smiling at me, with that intolerable parting exactly opposite the bridge of my nose.

"There is such a feeling sometimes, no doubt,"
I replied; "but I don't think it obtains to any
great extent."

"Well," said he, with a shrug and a smile, "I wish some good angel would influence my friend

in the right direction. I rashly promised his mother and sister in Norfolk to see it done, and he promised them that he would do it. But I suppose he never will."

He spoke for a minute or two on indifferent topics, and went away.

I had scarcely unlocked the drawers of my writing-table next morning when he reappeared.

I noticed that he came straight to the door in the glass partition, and did not pause a single moment outside.

"Can you spare me two minutes, my dear Mr. Sampson?"

"By all means."

"Much obliged," laying his hat and umbrella on the table. "I came early, not to interrupt you. The fact is, I am taken by surprise in reference to this proposal my friend has made."

"Has he made one?" said I.

[&]quot;Ye-es," he answered, deliberately looking at

me; and then a bright idea seemed to strike him—"or he only tells me he has. Perhaps that may be a new way of evading the matter. By Jupiter, I never thought of that!"

Mr. Adams was opening the morning's letters in the outer office. "What is the name, Mr. Slinkton?" I asked.

"Beckwith."

I looked out at the door and requested Mr. Adams, if there were a proposal in that name to bring it in. He had already laid it out of his hand on the counter. It was easily selected from the rest, and he gave it me. Alfred Beckwith. Proposal to effect a policy with us for two thousand pounds. Dated yesterday.

"From the Middle Temple, I see, Mr. Slinkton?"

"Yes; he lives on the same staircase with me: his door is opposite. I never thought he would make me his reference though." "It seems natural enough that he should."

"Quite so, Mr. Sampson; but I never thought of it. Let me see." He took the printed paper from his pocket. "How am I to answer all these questions?"

"According to the truth, of course," said I.

"Oh! of course," he answered, looking up from the paper with a smile; "I meant they were so many. But you do right to be particular. It stands to reason that you must be particular. Will you allow me to use your pen and ink?"

" Certainly."

"And your desk?"

"Certainly."

He had been hovering about between his hat and his umbrella, for a place to write on. He now sat down in my chair, at my blotting paper and inkstand, with the long walk up his head in accurate perspective before me, as I stood with my back to the fire.

Before answering each question, he ran over it aloud and discussed it:-How long had he known Mr. Alfred Beckwith? That he had to calculate by years upon his fingers. What were his habits? No difficulty about them; temperate in the last degree, and took a little too much exercise, if anything. All the answers were satisfactory. When he had written them all, he looked them over, and finally signed them in a very pretty hand. He supposed he had now done with the business? I told him he was not likely to be troubled any further. Should he leave the papers there? If he pleased. Much obliged. Good morning!

I had had one other visitor before him; not at the office, but at my own house. That visitor had come to my bedside when it was not yet daylight, and had been seen by no one else but by my faithful confidential servant.

A second reference paper (for we required

always two) was sent down into Norfolk, and was duly received back by post. This likewise was satisfactorily answered in every respect. Our forms were all complied with, we accepted the proposal, and the premium for one year was paid.

IV.

For six or seven months I saw no more of Mr. Slinkton. He called once at my house, but I was not at home; and he once asked me to dine with him in the Temple, but I was engaged. His friend's Assurance was effected in March. Late in September or early in October I was down at Scarborough for a breath of sea air, where I met him on the beach. It was a hot evening; he came towards me with his hat in his hand, and there was the walk I had felt so strongly disinclined to take, in perfect order again, exactly in front of the bridge of my nose.

He was not alone, but had a young lady on his arm. She was dressed in mourning, and I looked at her with great interest. She had the appearance of being extremely delicate, and her face was remarkably pale and melancholy, but she was very pretty. He introduced her as his niece, Miss Niner.

"Are you strolling, Mr. Sampson? Is it possible you can be idle?"

It was possible, and I was strolling.

"Shall we stroll together?"

"With pleasure."

The young lady walked between us, and we walked on the cool sea sand in the direction of Filey.

"There have been wheels here," said Mr. Slinkton; "and now I look again, the wheels of a hand-carriage! Margaret, my love, your shadow, without doubt!"

"Miss Niner's shadow?" I repeated, looking down at it on the sand.

"Not that one," Mr. Slinkton returned, laughing. "Margaret, my dear, tell Mr. Sampson?"

"Indeed," said the young lady, turning to me

"there is nothing to tell—except that I constantly see the same invalid old gentleman, at all times, wherever I go. I have mentioned it to my uncle, and he calls the gentleman my shadow."

- "Does he live in Scarborough?" I asked.
- "He is staying here."
- "Do you live in Scarborough?"
- "No, I am staying here. My uncle has placed me with a family here, for my health."
 - "And your shadow?" said I, smiling.
- "My shadow," she answered, smiling too, "is—like myself—not very robust, I fear; for, I lose my shadow sometimes, as my shadow loses me at other times. We both seem liable to confinement to the house. I have not seen my shadow for days and days; but it does oddly happen, occasionally, that wherever I go, for many days together, this gentleman goes. We have come together in the most unfrequented nooks on this shore."

"Is this he?" said I, pointing before us.

The wheels had swept down to the water's edge, and described a great loop on the sand in turning. Bringing the loop back towards us, and spinning it out as it came, was a hand-carriage drawn by a man.

"Yes," said Miss Niner, "this really is my shadow, uncle!"

As the carriage approached us and we approached the carriage, I saw within it an old man, whose head was sunk on his breast, and who was enveloped in a variety of wrappers. He was drawn by a very quiet but very keen-looking man, with iron grey hair, who was slightly lame. They had passed us, when the carriage stopped, and the old gentleman within, putting out his arm, called to me by my name. I went back, and was absent from Mr. Slinkton and his niece for about five minutes.

When I rejoined them, Mr. Slinkton was the

first to speak. Indeed, he said to me in a raised voice before I came up with him: "It is well you have not been longer or my niece might have died of curiosity to know who her shadow is, Mr. Sampson."

"An old East India Director," said I.

"An intimate friend of our friend's at whose house I first had the pleasure of meeting you.

A certain Major Banks. You have heard of him?"

"Never."

"Very rich, Miss Niner; but very old, and very crippled. An amiable man, sensible; much interested in you. He has just been expatiating on the affection that he has observed to exist between you and your uncle."

Mr. Slinkton was holding his hat again, and he passed his hand up the straight walk, as if he himself went up it serenely, after me.

"Mr. Sampson," he said, tenderly pressing his niece's arm in his, "our affection was always

a strong one, for we have had but few near ties.
We have still fewer now. We have associations
to bring us together that are not of this world,
Margaret."

"Dear uncle!" murmured the young lady, and turned her face aside to hide her tears.

"My niece and I have such remembrances and regrets in common, Mr. Sampson," he feelingly pursued, "that it would be strange indeed if the relations between us were cold or indifferent. If I remember a conversation we once had together, you will understand the reference I make. Cheer up, dear Margaret. Don't droop, don't droop. My Margaret! I cannot bear to see you droop!"

The poor young lady was very much affected, but controlled herself. His feelings, too, were very acute. In a word, he found himself under such great need of a restorative that he presently went away to take a bath of sea-water, leaving

the young lady and me sitting by a point of rock, and probably presuming—but that, you will say, was a pardonable indulgence in a luxury—that she would praise him with all her heart.

She did, poor thing. With all her confiding heart she praised him to me for his care of her dead sister, and for his untiring devotion in her last illness. The sister had wasted away very slowly, and wild and terrible fantasies had come over her towards the end, but he had never been impatient with her, or at a loss; had always been gentle, watchful, and self-possessed. The sister had known him, as she had known him, to be the best of men, the kindest of men, and yet a man of such admirable strength of character as to be a very tower for the support of their weak natures while their poor lives endured.

"I shall leave him, Mr. Sampson, very soon," said the young lady; "I know my life is drawing to an end; and when I am gone I hope he

will marry and be happy. I am sure he has lived single so long only for my sake and for my poor, poor sister's."

The little hand-carriage had made another great loop on the damp sand, and was coming back again, gradually spinning out a slim figure of eight, half a mile long.

"Young lady," said I, looking round, laying my hand upon her arm, and speaking in a low voice: "time presses. You hear the gentle murmur of that sea?"

She looked at me with the utmost wonder and alarm, saying, "Yes."

"And you know what a voice is in it when the storm comes?"

"Yes."

"You see how quiet and peaceful it lies before us, and you know what an awful sight of power without pity it might be, this very night?"

[&]quot;Ves."

"But if you had never heard or seen it, or heard of it, in its cruelty, could you believe that it beats every inanimate thing in its way to pieces, without mercy, and destroys life without remorse?"

"You terrify me, sir, by these questions!"

"To save you, young lady, to save you! For God's sake, collect your strength and collect your firmness! If you were here alone, and hemmed in by the rising tide on the flow to fifty feet above your head, you could not be in greater danger than the danger you are now to be saved from."

The figure on the sand was spun out, and straggled off into a crooked little jerk that ended at the cliff very near us.

"As I am, before Heaven and the Judge of all mankind, your friend, and your dead sister's friend, I solemnly entreat you, Miss Niner, without one moment's loss of time, to come to this gentleman with me!"

If the little carriage had been less near to

us I doubt if I could have got her away; but it was so near that we were there before she had recovered the hurry of being urged from the rock. I did not remain there with her two minutes. Certainly within five I had the inexpressible satisfaction of seeing her—from the point we had sat on, and to which I had returned—half supported and half carried up some rude steps notched in the cliff by the figure of an active man. With that figure beside her I knew she was safe anywhere.

I sat alone on the rock, awaiting Mr. Slinkton's return. The twilight was deepening and the shadows were heavy, when he came round the point, with his hat hanging at his buttonhole, smoothing his wet hair with one of his hands, and picking out the old path with the other and a pocket-comb.

"My niece not here, Mr. Sampson?" he said, looking about

"Miss Niner seemed to feel a chill in the air after the sun was down, and has gone home."

He looked surprised, as though she were not accustomed to do anything without him: even to originate so slight a proceeding. "I persuaded Miss Niner," I explained.

"Ah!" said he. "She is easily persuaded—for her good. Thank you, Mr. Sampson: she is better within doors. The bathing-place was farther than I thought, to say the truth

"Miss Niner is very delicate," I observed.

He shook his head and drew a deep sigh. "Very, very, very. You may recollect my saying so. The time that has since intervened has not strengthened her. The gloomy shadow that fell upon her sister so early in life seems, in my anxious eyes, to gather over her, ever darker, ever darker. Dear Margaret, dear Margaret! But we must hope."

The hand-carriage was spinning away before

us, at a most indecorous pace for an invalid vehicle, and was making most irregular curves upon the sand. Mr. Slinkton, noticing it after he had put his handkerchief to his eyes, said—

"If I may judge from appearances, your friend will be upset, Mr. Sampson."

"It looks probable, certainly," said I.

"The servant must be drunk."

"The servants of old gentlemen will get drunk, sometimes," said I.

"The major draws very light, Mr. Sampson."

"The major does draw light," said I.

By this time the carriage, much to my relief, was lost in the darkness. We walked on for a little side by side over the sand, in silence. After a short while, he said, in a voice still affected by the emotion that his niece's state of health had awakened in him—

"Do you stay here long, Mr. Sampson?"

"Why, no. I am going away to-night."

"So soon? But business always holds you in request. Men like Mr. Sampson are too important to others to be spared to their own need of relaxation and enjoyment."

"I don't know about that," said I. "However, I am going back."

"To London?"

"To London."

"I shall be there too, soon after you."

I knew that as well as he did. But I did not tell him so. Any more than I told him what defensive weapon my right hand rested on in my pocket as I walked by his side. Any more than I told him why I did not walk on the sea-side of him with the night closing in.

We left the beach, and our ways diverged.

We exchanged "Good night," and had parted indeed, when he said, returning—

"Mr. Sampson, may I ask? Poor Meltham, whom we spoke of—Dead yet?"

"Not when I last heard of him; but too broken a man to live long, and hopelessly lost to his old calling."

"Dear, dear!" said he, with great feeling. "Sad, sad, sad! The world is a grave!" And so went his way.

It was not his fault if the world were not a grave; but I did not call that observation after him, any more than I had mentioned those other things just now enumerated. He went his way, and I went mine with all expedition. This happened, as I have said, either at the end of September or beginning of October. The next time I saw him, and the last time, was late in November.

V.

I had a very particular engagement to breakfast in the Temple. It was a bitter northeasterly morning, and the sleet and slush lay inches deep in the streets. I could get no conveyance, and was soon wet to the knees; but, I should have been true to that appointment though I had had to wade it up to my neck in the same impediments.

The appointment took me to some chambers in the Temple. They were at the top of a lonely corner house overlooking the river. The name, Mr. Alfred Beckwith, was painted on the outer door. On the door opposite, on the same landing, the name Mr. Julius Slinkton. The doors of both sets of chambers stood open, so that anything said aloud in one set could be heard in the other.

I had never been in those chambers before.

They were dismal, close, unwholcsome, and oppressive; the furniture, originally good, and not yet old, was faded and dirty—the rooms were in great disorder; there was a strong pervading smell of opium, brandy, and tobacco; the grate and fire-irons were splashed all over with unsightly blotches of rust; and on a sofa by the fire, in the room where breakfast had been prepared, lay the host, Mr. Beckwith, a man with all the appearances of the worst kind of drunkard, very far advanced upon his shameful way to death.

"Slinkton is not come yet," said this creature, staggering up when I went in; "I'll call him. Halloa! Julius Cæsar! Come and drink!"

As he hoarsely roared this out, he beat the poker and tongs together in a mad way, as if that were his usual manner of summoning his associate.

The voice of Mr. Slinkton was heard through the clatter from the opposite side of the staircase, and he came in. He had not expected the pleasure of meeting me. I have seen several artful men brought to a stand, but I never saw a man so aghast as he was when his eyes rested on mine.

"Julius Cæsar," cried Beckwith, staggering between us, "Mist' Sampson! Mist' Sampson, Julius Cæsar! Julius, Mist' Sampson, is the friend of my soul. Julius keeps me plied with liquor, morning, noon, and night. Julius is a real benefactor. Julius threw the tea and coffee out of window when I used to have any. Julius empties all the water-jugs of their contents, and fills 'em with spirits. Julius winds me up and keeps me going. Boil the brandy, Julius!"

There was a rusty and furred saucepan in the ashes—the ashes looked like the accumulation of weeks—and Beckwith, rolling and staggering between us as if he were going to plunge head-

long into the fire, got the saucepan out, and tried to force it into Slinkton's hand.

"Boil the brandy, Julius Cæsar! Come! Do your usual office. Boil the brandy!"

He became so fierce in his gesticulations with the saucepan that I expected to see him lay open Slinkton's head with it. I therefore put out my hand to check him. He reeled back to the sofa, and sat there panting, shaking, and redeyed, in his rags of dressing-gown, looking at us both. I noticed then that there was nothing to drink on the table but brandy, and nothing to eat but salted herrings, and a hot, sickly, highlypeppered stew.

"At all events, Mr. Sampson," said Slinkton, offering me the smooth gravel-path for the last time, "I thank you for interfering between me and this unfortunate man's violence. However you came here, Mr. Sampson, or with whatever motive you came here, at least I thank you for that."

"Boil the brandy," muttered Beckwith.

Without gratifying his desire to know how I came there, I said, quietly: "How is your niece, Mr. Slinkton?"

He looked hard at me, and I looked hard at him.

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Sampson, that my niece has proved treacherous and ungrateful to her best friend. She left me without a word of notice or explanation. She was misled, no doubt, by some designing rascal. Perhaps you may have heard of it?"

"I did hear that she was misled by a designing rascal. In fact, I have proof of it."

"Are you sure of that?" said he.

" Quite."

"Boil the brandy," muttered Beckwith.

"Company to breakfast, Julius Cæsar! Do your usual office—provide the usual breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper. Boil the brandy!"

The eyes of Slinkton looked from him to me, and he said, after a moment's consideration:

"Mr. Sampson, you are a man of the world, and so am I. I will be plain with you."

"Oh, no, you wont," said I, shaking my head.

"I tell you, sir, I will be plain with you."

"And I tell you, you will not," said I. "I know all about you. You plain with any one? Nonsense, nonsense!"

"I plainly tell you, Mr. Sampson," he went on, with a manner almost composed, "that I understand your object. You want to save your funds, and escape from your liabilities; these are old tricks of trade with you Office-gentlemen. But you will not do it, sir; you will not succeed. You have not an easy adversary to play against when you play against me. We shall have to inquire, in due time, when and how Mr. Beckwith fell into his present habits.

With that remark, sir, I put this poor creature and his incoherent wanderings of speech, aside, and wish you a good morning and a better case next time."

While he was saying this Beckwith had filled a half-pint glass with brandy. At this moment he threw the brandy at his face, and threw the glass after it. Slinkton put his hands up, half blinded by the spirit, and cut with the glass across the forehead. At the sound of the breakage, a fourth person came into the room, closed the door, and stood at it: he was a very quiet but very keen-looking man, with iron grey hair, and slightly lame.

Slinkton pulled out his handkerchief, assuaged the pain in his smarting eyes, and dabbled the blood on his forehead. He was a long time about it, and I saw that, in the doing of it, a tremendous change came over him, occasioned by the change in Beckwith, who ceased to pant

and tremble, sat upright, and never took his eyes off him. I never in my life saw a face in which abhorrence and determination were so forcibly painted as in Beckwith's then.

"Look at me, you villain!" said Beckwith, "and see me as I really am. I took these rooms to make them a trap for you. I came into them as a drunkard, to bait the trap for you. You fell into the trap, and you will never leave it alive. On the morning when you last went to Mr. Sampson's office I had seen him first. Your plot has been known to both of us all along, and you have been counterplotted all along. What? Having been cajoled into putting that prize of two thousand pounds in your power, I was to be done to death with brandy, and brandy not proving quick enough, with something quicker? Have I never seen you, when you thought my senses gone, pouring from your little bottle into my glass? Why, you Murderer and Forger, alone here with you in the dead of night, as I have so often been, I have had my hand upon the trigger of a pistol twenty times to blow your brains out!"

This sudden starting up of the thing that he had supposed to be his imbecile victim into a determined man, with a settled resolution to hunt him down and be the death of him, mercilessly expressed from head to foot, was, in the first shock, too much for him. Without any figure of speech he staggered under it. there is no greater mistake than to suppose that a man who is a calculating criminal is, in any phase of his guilt, otherwise than true to himself and perfectly consistent with his whole character. Such a man commits murder, and murder is the natural culmination of his course; such a man has to outface murder, and will do it with hardihood and effrontery. It is a sort of fashion to express surprise that any notorious criminal,

having such crime upon his conscience, can so brave it out. Do you think that if he had it on his conscience at all, or had a conscience to have it upon, he would ever have committed the crime?

Perfectly consistent with himself, as I believe all such monsters to be, this Slinkton recovered himself, and showed a defiance that was sufficiently cold and quiet. He was white, he was haggard, he was changed; but only as a sharper who had played for a great stake and had been outwitted and had lost the game.

"Listen to me, you villain," said Beckwith,

"and let every word you hear me say be a stab
in your wicked heart! When I took these rooms,
to throw myself in your way and lead you on to
the scheme that I knew my appearance and supposed character and habits would suggest to such
a devil, how did I know that? Because you
were no stranger to me. I knew you well. And
I knew you to be the cruel wretch who, for so

much money, had killed one innocent girl while she trusted him implicitly, and who was, by inches, killing another."

Slinkton took out a snuff-box, took a pinch of snuff, and laughed.

"But, see here," said Beckwith, never looking away, never raising his voice, never relaxing his face, never unclenching his hand. "See what a dull wolf you have been, after all! The infatuated drunkard who never drank a fiftieth part of the liquor you plied him with, but poured it away, here, there, everywhere—almost before your eyes; who bought over the fellow you set to watch him and to ply him, by outbidding you in his bribe, before he had been at his work three days—with whom you have observed no caution, yet who was so bent on ridding the earth of you as a wild beast that he would have defeated you if you had been ever so prudentthat drunkard whom you have many a time left

on the floor of this room, and who has even let you go out of it, alive and undeceived, when you have turned him over with your foot—has, almost as often, on the same night, within an hour, within a few minutes, watched you awake, had his hand at your pillow when you were asleep, turned over your papers, taken samples from your bottles and packets of powder, changed their contents, rifled every secret of your life!"

He had had another pinch of snuff in his hand, but had gradually let it drop from between his fingers to the floor, where he now smoothed it out with his foot, looking down at it the while.

"That drunkard," said Beckwith, "who had free access to your rooms at all times, that he might drink the strong drinks that you left in his way and be the sooner ended, holding no more terms with you than he would hold with a tiger, has had his master-key for all your locks, his test for all your poisons, his clue to your cipher-

writing. He can tell you, as well as you can tell him, how long it took to complete that deed, what doses there were, what intervals, what signs of gradual decay of mind and body; what distempered fancies were produced, what observable changes, what physical pain. He can tell you, as well as you can tell him, that all this was recorded day by day, as a lesson of experience for future service. He can tell you, better than you can tell him, where that journal is at this moment."

Slinkton stopped the action of his foot, and looked at Beckwith.

"No," said the latter, as if answering a question from him. "Not in the drawer of the writing-desk that opens with the spring; it is not there, and it never will be there again."

"Then you are a thief!" said Slinkton.

Without any change whatever in the inflexible purpose which it was quite terrific even to me to

contemplate, and from the power of which I had always felt convinced it was impossible for this wretch to escape, Beckwith returned:

"And I am your niece's shadow, too."

With an imprecation, Slinkton put his hand to his head, tore out some hair, and flung it to the ground. It was the end of the smooth walk; he destroyed it in the action, and it will soon be seen that his use for it was past.

Beckwith went on: "Whenever you left here, I left here. Although I understood that you found it necessary to pause in the completion of that purpose to avert suspicion, still I watched you close with the poor confiding girl. When I had the diary, and could read it word by word—it was only about the night before your last visit to Scarborough; you remember the night? you slept with a small flat vial tied to your wrist—I sent to Mr. Sampson, who was kept out of view. This is Mr. Sampson's trusty servant standing

by the door. We three saved your niece among us."

Slinkton looked at us all, took an uncertain step or two from the place where he had stood, returned to it, and glanced about him in a very curious way—as one of the meaner reptiles might, looking for a hole to hide in. I noticed at the same time that a singular change took place in the figure of the man—as if it collapsed within his clothes, and they consequently became ill-shapen and ill-fitting.

'You shall know," said Beckwith, "for I hope the knowledge will be bitter and terrible to you, why you have been pursued by one man, and why, when the whole interest that Mr. Sampson represents would have expended any money in hunting you down, you have been tracked to death at a single individual's charge. I hear you have had the name of Meltham on your lips sometimes?"

I saw, in addition to those other changes, a sudden stoppage come upon his breathing.

"When you sent the sweet girl whom you murdered (you know with what artfully-madeout surroundings and probabilities you sent her) to Meltham's office, before taking her abroad to originate the transaction that doomed her to the grave, it fell to Meltham's lot to see her and to speak with her. It did not fall to his lot to save her, though I know he would freely give his own life to have done it. He admired her ;—I would say he loved her deeply, if I thought it possible that you could understand the word. When she was sacrificed he was thoroughly assured of your guilt. Having lost her he had but one object left in life, and that was, to avenge her and destroy you."

I saw the villain's nostrils rise and fall convulsively; but I saw no moving at his mouth.

[&]quot;That man, Meltham," Beckwith steadily pur-

sued, "was as absolutely certain that you could never elude him in this world, if he devoted himself to your destruction with his utmost fidelity and earnestness, and if he divided the sacred duty with no other duty in life, as he was certain that in achieving it he would be a poor instrument in the hands of Providence, and would do well before Heaven in striking you out from among living men. I am that man, and I thank God that I have done my work!"

If Slinkton had been running for his life from swift-footed savages a dozen miles he could not have shown more emphatic signs of being oppressed at heart and labouring for breath than he showed now, when he looked at the pursuer who had so relentlessly hunted him down.

"You never saw me, under my right name, before; you see me under my right name now. You shall see me once again in the body when you are tried for your life. You shall see me

once again in the spirit when the cord is round your neck, and the crowd are crying against you!"

When Meltham had spoken these last words, the miscreant suddenly turned away his face, and seemed to strike his mouth with his open hand. At the same instant the room was filled with a new and powerful odour, and almost at the same instant, he broke into a crooked run, leap, start—I have no name for the spasm—and fell, with a dull weight that shook the heavy old doors and windows in their frames.

That was the fitting end of him.

When we saw that he was dead we drew away from the room, and Meltham, giving me his hand, said, with a weary air:

"I have no more work on earth, my friend But I shall see her again elsewhere."

It was in vain that I tried to rally him. He might have saved her, he said; he had not saved

her, and he reproached himself; he had lost her, and he was broken-hearted.

"The purpose that sustained me is over, Sampson, and there is nothing now to hold me to life. I am not fit for life; I am weak and spiritless; I have no hope and no object; my day is done."

In truth, I could hardly have believed that the broken man who then spoke to me was the man who had so strongly and so differently impressed me when his purpose was before him. I used such entreaties with him as I could; but he still said, and always said, in a patient, undemonstrative way, nothing could avail him—he was broken-hearted.

He died early in the next spring. He was buried by the side of the poor young lady for whom he had cherished those tender and unhappy regrets; and he left all he had to her sister. She lived to be a happy wife and mother; she married my sister's son, who succeeded poor Meltham; she is living now, and her children ride about the garden on my walking-stick when I go to see her.

THE END.

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tale was the MS. found in a Bottle. This award was published on the 12th of October, 1833. The next day, the publisher called to see Mr. Kennedy, one of the committee and a well-known literary character, and gave him an account of the author, which excited his curiosity and sympathy, and caused him to request that he should be brought to his office. Accordingly, he was introduced; the prize-money had not yet been paid, and he was in the costume in which he had answered the advertisement of his good fortune. Thin, and pale even to ghastliness, his whole appearance indicated sickness and the utmost destitution. A well-worn frockcoat concealed the absence of a shirt, and imperfect boots disclosed the want of hose. But the eyes of the young man were luminous with intelligence and feeling, and his voice and conversation and manners all won upon the lawyer's regard. Poe told his history, and his ambition, and it was determined that he should not want means for a suitable appearance in society, nor opportunity for a just display of his abilities in literature. Mr. Kennedy accompanied him to a clothing store, and purchased for him a respectable suit, with changes of linen, and sent him to a bath, from which he returned with the suddenly-regained style of a gentleman.

His new friends were very kind to him, and availed themselves of every opportunity to serve him. Through their efforts, he obtained the editorship of a magazine published at Richmond, Virginia, to which he contributed numerous articles; but, after the lapse of a few months, his old habits of dissipation began to show themselves, and for a week he was in a condition of brutish drunkenness, which resulted in his dismissal. When he became sober, however, he had no resource but in reconciliation; and he wrote letters and induced acquaintances to call upon his employer, Mr. White, with professions of repentance and promises of reformation. With considerate and judicious kindness, that gentle-

man answered him:-

"My dear Edgar,—I cannot address you in such language as this occasion and my feelings demand: I must be content to speak to you in my plain way. That you are sincere in all your promises, I firmly believe; but, when you once again tread these streets, I have my fears that your resolutions will fail, and that you will again drink till your senses are lost. If you rely on your strength, you are gone. Unless you look to your Maker for help, you will not be safe. How much I regretted parting from you, is known to Him only and myself. I had become attached to you; I am still; and I would willingly say return, did not a knowledge of your past life make me dread a speedy renewal of our separation. If you would make yourself contented with quarters in my house, or with any other private family, where liquor is not used, I should think there was some hope for you; but, if you go to a tavern, or

to any place where it is used at table, you are not safe. You have fine talents, Edgar, and you ought to have them respected, as well as yourself. Learn to respect yourself, and you will soon find that you are respected. Separate yourself from the bottle, and from bottle companions, for ever. Tell me if you can and will do so. If you again become an assistant in my office, it must be understood that all engagements on my part cease the moment you get drunk. I am your true friend,

T. W. W."

A new contract was arranged, but Poe's irregularities frequently interrupted the kindness, and finally exhausted the patience, of his generous though methodical employer; and in January, 1837, he

took his leave of the readers of the magazine.

While in Richmond, with an income of but a hundred pounds a-year, he had married his cousin, Virginia Clemm, a very amiable and lovely girl, who was as poor as himself, and little fitted, except by her gentle temper, to be the wife of such a person. He went from Richmond to Baltimore, and, after a short time, to Philaderphia, and then to New York; and, towards the end of the year 1838, ne settled in Philadelphia. He had no very definite purposes, but trusted for support to the chances of success as a magazinist and newspaper correspondent. Mr. Burton, a comedian, had recently established a magazine, in Philadelphia, and to this Poe first became a contributor and afterwards chief editor.

An awakened ambition, and the healthful influence of a conviction that his works were appreciated and that his fame was increasing, led him, for a while, to cheerful views of life and to regular habits of conduct. He wrote to one friend, that he had quite overcome "the seductive and dangerous besetment" by which he had so often been prostrated, and to another that, incredible as it might seem, he had become a "model of temperance," and of "other virtues," which it had sometimes been difficult for him to practise. Before the close of the summer, however, he relapsed into his former courses, and for weeks was regardless of everything but a morbid and insatiable appetite for the means of intoxication.

He was with Mr. Burton until June, 1840—more than a year. Mr. Burton appreciated his abilities, and would gladly have continued the connexion, but Poe was so unsteady of purpose and so unreliable, that the actor was never sure when he left the city that his business would be cared for. On one occasion, returning after the regular day of publication, he found the number unfinished and Poe incapable of duty. He prepared the necessary copy himself, published the magazine, and was proceeding with arrangements for another month, when he received a letter from his assistant, of which the tone may be inferred from this answer:—

"I am sorry you have thought it necessary to send me such s

letter. Your troubles have given a morbid tone to your feelings which it is your duty to discourage. I myself have been as severely handled by the world as you could possibly have been, but my sufferings have not tinged my mind with melancholy, nor jaundiced my views of society. You must rouse your energies, and if care assail you, conquer it. I will gladly overlook the past. I hope you will as easily fulfil your pledges for the future. We shall agree very well, though I cannot permit the magazine to be made a vehicle for that sort of severity which you think is so 'successful with the mob.' I am truly much less anxious about making a monthly "sensation" than I am upon the point of fair-You must, my dear sir, get rid of your avowed ill-feelings toward your brother authors. You see I speak plainly: I cannot do otherwise upon such a subject. You say the people love havoc. I think they love justice. I think you yourself would not have written the article on Dawes in a more healthy state of mind. I am not trammelled by any vulgar consideration of expediency; I would rather lose money than, by such undue severity, wound the feelings of a kind-hearted and honourable man; and I am satisfied that Dawes has something of the true fire in him. I regretted your word-catching spirit. But I wander from my design. I accept your proposition to recommence your interrupted avocations upon the Maga. Let us meet as if we had not exchanged letters. Use more exercise, write when feelings prompt, and be assured of my friendship. You will soon regain a healthy activity of mind, and laugh at your past vagaries."

This letter was kind and judicious. It gives us a glimpse of Poe's theory of criticism, and displays the temper and principles of the literary comedian in an honourable light. Two or three months afterwards, Burton went out of town to fulfil a professional engagement, leaving material and directions for completing the next number of the magazine in four days. He was absent nearly a fortnight, and, on returning, he found that his printers in the meanwhile had not received a line of copy; but that Poe had prepared the prospectus of a new monthly, and obtained transcripts of his subscription and account books, to be used in a scheme for supplanting him. He encountered his associate late in the evening at one of his accustomed haunts, and said: "Mr. Poe, I am astonished: give me my manuscripts, so that I can attend to the duties you have so shamefully neglected, and when you are sober we will settle." Poe interrupted him with-"Who are you that presume to address me in this manner? Burton, I am-the editor-of the Penn Magazine-and you are-hiccup-a fool." Of course, this

anded his relations with the magazine.

A few months afterwards, however, he was installed as editor of Graham's Magazine, and his connexion with this periodical which

lasted about a year and a half, was one of the most active and brilliant periods of his literary life. He wrote in it several of his finest tales and most trenchant criticisms, and challenged attention by his papers entitled Autography, and those on cryptology and cyphers. In the first, adopting a suggestion of Lavater, he attempted the illustration of character from hand-writing; and, in the second, he assumed that human ingenuity could construct no secret writing which human ingenuity could not resolve—a not very dangerous proposition, since it implied no capacity in himself to discover every riddle of this kind that should be invented. He, however, succeeded with several difficult cryptographs that were sent to him, and the direction of his mind to the subject led tothe composition of some of the tales of ratiocination which solargely increased his reputation. The infirmities which induced his separation from Mr. White and from Mr. Burton at length compelled Mr. Graham to seek for another editor; but Poe still remained in Philadelphia, engaged from time to time in various literary occupations, and in the vain effort to establish a journal of his own to be called The Stylus. Although it requires considerable capital to carry on a monthly of the description he proposed, I think it would not have been difficult, with his well-earned fame as a magazinist, for him to have found a competent and suitable publisher, but for the unfortunate notoriety of his habits, and the failure in succession of three persons who had admired him for his genius and pitied him for his misfortunes, by every means that tact or friendship could suggest, to induce the consistency and steadiness of application indispensable to success in such pursuits.

During his residence at Philadelphia, his manner, except during his fits of intoxication, was very quiet and gentlemanly; he was usually dressed with simplicity and elegance; and there was a singular neatness and air of refinement in his home. It was in a small house, in one of the pleasant and silent neighbourhoods far from the centre of the town, and though slightly and cheaply furnished, everything in it was so tasteful and so fitly disposed that it seemed altogether suitable for a man of genius. For this, and for most of the comforts he enjoyed in his brightest as in his darkest years, he was chiefly indebted to his mother-in-law, who loved

him with more than maternal devotion and constancy.

In the autumn of 1844, Poe removed to New York, and forthwith entered upon a new sort of life. Heretofore, from the commencement of his literary career, he had resided in provincial towns. Now he was in a metropolis, and with a reputation which might have served as a passport to any society he could desire. For the first time, he was received into circles capable of both the appreciation and the production of literature. He added to his fame, soen after he came to the city, by the publication of that re-

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markable composition, The Raven, of which Mr. Willis has observed that, in his opinion, "it is the most effective single example of fugitive poetry ever published in America, and is unsurpassed in English poetry for subtle conception, masterly ingenuity of versification, and consistent sustaining of imaginative power." His reputation as a magazinist rose rapidly, and he contributed numerous tales and critical articles to several of the chief periodicals. While on the high road to fame, however, he became engaged in various disputes, which of themselves, and the manner in which he sought to excuse his errors, reflect but little credit on his moral character. To give an example, he borrowed fifty dollars from a distinguished literary woman of South Carolina, promising to return it in a few days, and when he failed to do so, and was asked for a written acknowledgment of the debt that might be exhibited to the husband of the friend who had thus served him, he denied all knowledge of it, and threatened to exhibit a correspondence which he said would make the woman infamous, if she said any more on the subject. Of course, there had never been any such correspondence; but, when Poe heard that a brother of the slandered party was in quest of him for the purpose of taking the satisfaction supposed to be due in such cases, he sent for a friend and induced him to carry to the gentleman his retractation and apology, with a statement, which seemed true enough at the moment, that Poe was "out of his mind." It is an ungracious duty for a biographer to have to describe such conduct on the part of a person of Poe's unquestionable genius and enlarged capacity; but those who are familiar with the career of this extraordinary creature, can unfortunately recall but too many similar anecdotes.

As the autumn of 1846 wore on, Poe's habits of frequent intoxication and his inattention to the means of support reduced him to much more than common destitution. He was now living at Fordham, several miles from New York, so that his necessities were not generally known even among his acquaintances; but when the dangerous illness of his wife was added to his misfortunes, and his dissipation and accumulated causes of anxiety had prostrated all his own energies, the subject was introduced into the journals. The result was a variety of pesuniary contributions, sufficient to relieve him from all temporary embarrassments; but his wife did not live to share this better fortune, for the illness above mentioned terminated in her death. A circumstance narrated by Mr. N. P.

Willis refers to the period of Poe's life:-

"Our first knowledge of Mr. Poe's removal to this city was by a call which we received from a lady who introduced herself to us as the mother of his wife. She was in search of employment for him, and she excused her errand by mentioning that he was ill, that her daughter was a confirmed invalid, and that their circum-

stances were such as compelled her taking it upon herself. countenance of this lady, made beautiful and saintly with an evidently complete giving up of her life to privation and sorrowful tenderness, her gentle and mournful voice urging its plea, her long-forgotten but habitually and unconsciously-refined manners, and her appealing and yet appreciative mention of the claims and abilities of her son, disclosed at once the presence of one of those angels upon earth that women in adversity can be. It was a hard fate that she was watching over. Mr. Poe wrote with fastidious difficulty, and in a style too much above the popular level to be well paid. He was always in pecuniary difficulty, and, with his sick wife, frequently in want of the merest necessaries of life. Winter after winter, for years, the most touching sight to us, in this whole city, has been that tireless minister to genius, thinly and insufficiently clad, going from office to office with a poem, or an article on some literary subject, to sell-sometimes simply pleading in a broken voice that he was ill, and begging for himmentioning nothing but that 'he was ill,' whatever might be the reason for his writing nothing—and never, amid all her tears and recitals of distress, suffering one syllable to escape her lips that could convey a doubt of him, or a complaint, or a lessening or pride in his genius and good intentions. Her daughter died, a year and a half since, but she did not desert him. She continued his ministering angel—living with him—caring for him—guarding him against exposure, and, when he was carried away by temptation, amid grief and the loneliness of feelings unreplied to, and awoke from his self-abandonment prostrated in destitution and suffering, begging for him still. If woman's devotion, born with a first love and fed with human passion, hallow its object, as it is allowed to do, what does not a devotion like this-pure, disinterested, and holy as the watch of an invisible spirit—say for him who inspired it?"

For nearly a year, Mr. Poe was not often before the public, but he was as industrious, perhaps, as he had been at any time; and, early in 1848, advertisement was made of his intention to deliver several lectures, with a view to obtain an amount of money sufficient to establish a long-contemplated monthly magazine. His first lecture—and only one at this period—was given at the Society Library in New York, and was upon the Cosmogony of the Universe; it was attended by an eminently-intellectual auditory, and the reading of it occupied about two hours and a half; it was afterwards published under the title of Eureka, a Prose Poem.

To the composition of this work he brought his subtlest and highest capacities, in their most perfect development. Denying that the arcana of the universe can be explored by induction, but informing his imagination with the various results of science, he

cutered with unhesitating boldness, though with no guide but the divinest instinct, into the sea of speculation, and there built up of according laws and their phenomena, as under the influence of a scientific inspiration, his theory of Nature.

Poe was thoroughly persuaded that he had discovered the great secret; that the propositions of *Eureka* were true; and he was wont to talk of the subject with a sublime and electrical enthusiasm which they cannot have forgotten who were familiar with

him at the period of its publication.

In his preface he wrote:—"To the few who love me and whom I love; to those who feel, rather than to those who think; to the dreamers and these who put faith in dreams as in the only realities—I offer this book of truths; not in the character of truth-teller, but for the beauty that abounds in its truth, constituting it true. To these I present the composition as an art-product alone—let us say as a romance; or, if it be not urging too lofty a claim, as a poem. What I here propound is true; therefore it cannot die; or if by any means it be now trodden down so that it die, it will rise

again to the life everlasting."

From this time, Poe did not write much; he had quarrelled with the conductors of the chief magazines for which he had previously written, and they no longer sought his assistance. It was at this period that his name was associated with that of one of the most brilliant women of New England, and it was publicly announced that they were to be married. He had first seen her on his way from Boston, when he visited that city to deliver a poem before the Lyceum there. Restless, near the midnight, he wandered from his hotel near where she lived, until he saw her walking in a garden. He related the incident afterwards in one of his poems, worthy of himself, of her, and of the most exalted passion:—

"I saw thee once—once only—years ago; I must not say how many-but not many. It was a July midnight; and from out A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring, Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven, There fell a silvery-silken veil of light, With quietude, and sultriness, and slumber, Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand Roses that grew in an enchanted garden, Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe-Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses That gave out, in return for the love-light, Their odorous souls in an eestatic death-Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence. "Clad all in white. upon a violet bank I saw thee haif reclining; while the moon Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses, And on thine own, upturn'd-alas, in sorrow!

"Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight-Was it not Fate, (whose name is also Sorrow,) That bade me pause before that garden-gate, To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses? No footstep stirred; the hated world all slept, Save only thee and me. (Oh, Heaven!-oh, God! How my heart beats in coupling those two words!) Save only thee and me. I paused-I looked-And in an instant all things disappeared. (Ah, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!) The pearly lustre of the moon went out: The mossy banks and the meandering paths, The happy flowers and the repining trees, Were seen no more: the very roses' odours Died in the arms of the adoring airs. All—all expired save thee—save less than thou: Save only the divine light in thine eves— Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes. I saw but them—they were the world to me. I saw but them—saw only them for hours— Saw only them until the moon went down. What wild heart-histories seemed to lie enwritten Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres! How dark a woe! yet how sublime a hope! How silently serene a sea of pride! How daring an ambition! yet how deep-How fathomless a capacity for love!

"But now, at length, Dear Dian sank from sight Into a western couch of thunder-cloud; And thou, a gnost, amid the entombing trees Didst glide away. Only thine eyes remained. They would not go—they never yet have gone. Lighting my lonely pathway home that night They have not left me (as my hopes have) since They follow me-they lead me through the years. They are my ministers—yet I their slave. Their office is to illumine and enkindle-My duty, to be saved by their bright light, And purified in their electric fire, And sanctified in their elvsian fire. They fill my soul with beauty (which is hope), And are far up in heaven—the stars I kneel to In the sad, silent watches of my night; While even in the meridian glare of day I see them still—two sweetly scintillant Venuses, unextinguished by the sun!"

They were not married, and the breaking of the engagement affords a striking illustration of his character. He said to an acquaintance in New York, who congratulated with him upon the prospect of his union with a person of so much genius and so many virtues—"It is a mistake: I am not going to be married." "Why, Mr. Poe, I understand that the banns have been published." "I cannot help what you have heard, my dear madam; but, mark me, I shall not marry her." He left town the same evening, and, the next day, was reeling through the streets of the

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city which was the lady's home, and in the evening—that shid have been the evening before the bridal—in his drunkennesse committed at her house such outrages as made necessary a snmons of the police. Here was no insanity leading to indulge: he went from New York with a determination thus to inducen

ending of the engagement, and he succeeded.

Some time in August, 1849, Mr. Poe left New York for Virgia. In Philadelphia, he encountered persons who had been his acciates in dissipations while he lived there; and for several we he abandoned himself entirely to the control of his worst apetites. When his money was all spent, and the disorder of his described the extremity of his recent intoxication, he asked, in charity, means for the prosecution of his journey to Richmol. There, after a few days, he joined a temperance society, and is conduct showed the earnestness of his determination to reform is life.

He delivered, in some of the principal towns of Virgil, two lectures, which were well attended; and, renewing is acquaintance with a lady whom he had known in his youth, e was engaged to marry her, and wrote to his friends that he shed pass the remainder of his days among the scenes endeared by I

his pleasantest recollections of youth.

On Thursday, the 4th of October, he set out for New Ye, to fulfil a literary engagement and to prepare for his marries. Arriving in Baltimore, he gave his trunk to a porter, with distions to convey it to the cars which were to leave in an hour two for Philadelphia, and went into a tavern to obtain some freshment. Here he met acquaintances, who invited him to dri; all his resolutions and duties were soon forgotten; in a few has he was in such a state as is commonly induced only by long-attinued intoxication; after a night of insanity and exposure, he is carried to a hospital; and there, on the evening of Sunday, e seventh of October, 1849, he died, at the age of thirty-cityears.

It is a melancholy history. No American author of as m'h genius had ever as much unhappiness; but Poe's unhappiness is, in an unusual degree, the result of infirmities of nature, or voluntary faults in conduct. A writer, who evidently knew in well, and who came forward as his defender, is "compelled o admit that the blemishes in his life were effects of character rater than of circumstances." How this character might have be modified by a judicious education of all his faculties, is left for edecision of others; but it will be evident to those who read is biography, that the unchecked freedom of his earlier years was

unwise as its results were unfortunate.

The influence of Mr. Poe's aims and vicissitudes upon swritings was more conspicuous in his later than in his earr

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works. Nearly all that he wrote in the last two or three years—including much of his best poetry—was, in some sense, biographical. In draperies of his imagination, those who take the trouble to trace his steps will perceive, but slightly concealed, the figure of himself; and the lineaments here disclosed are not different from those displayed in this biography, which is but a filling up of the picture he has himself sketched.

In person, he was below the middle height, slenderly but compactly formed; and, in his better moments, he had, in an eminent degree, that air of gentlemanliness which men of a lower order

seldom succeed in acquiring.

His conversation was, at times, almost supra-mortal in its elo. quence. His voice was modulated with astonishing skill, and his large and variably-expressive eyes looked repose or shot fiery tumult into theirs who listened, while his own face glowed, or was changeless in pallor, as his imagination quickened his blood or drew it back frozen to his heart. His imagery was from the worlds which no mortals can see but with the vision of genius. Suddenly starting from a proposition, exactly and sharply defined, in terms of utmost simplicity and clearness, he rejected the forms of customary logic, and, by a crystalline process of accretion, built up his ocular demonstrations in forms of gloomiest and ghastliest grandeur, or in those of the most airy and delicious beauty—so minutely and distinctly, yet so rapidly, that the attention which was vielded to him was chained till it stood among his wonderful creations—till he himself dissolved the spell, and brought his hearers back to common and base existence, by vulgar fancies or exhibitions of the ignoblest passion.

He was at all times a dreamer—dwelling in ideal realms—in heaven or hell--peopled with the creatures and the accidents of He walked the streets in madness or melancholy, with lips moving in indistinct curses, or with eyes upturned in passionate prayer (never for himself, for he felt, or professed to feel, that he was already damned, but) for their happiness who, at the moment, were objects of his idolatry; or, with his glances introverted to a heart gnawed with anguish, and with a face shrouded in gloom, he would brave the wildest storms; and all night, with drenched garments and arms beating the winds and rains, would speak as if to spirits that at such times only could be evoked by him from the Aidenn, close by whose portals his disturbed soul sought to forget the ills to which his constitution subjected himclose by the Aidenn where were those he loved—the Aidenn which he might never see, but in fitful glimpses, as its gates opened to receive the less fiery and more happy natures whose destiny to sin

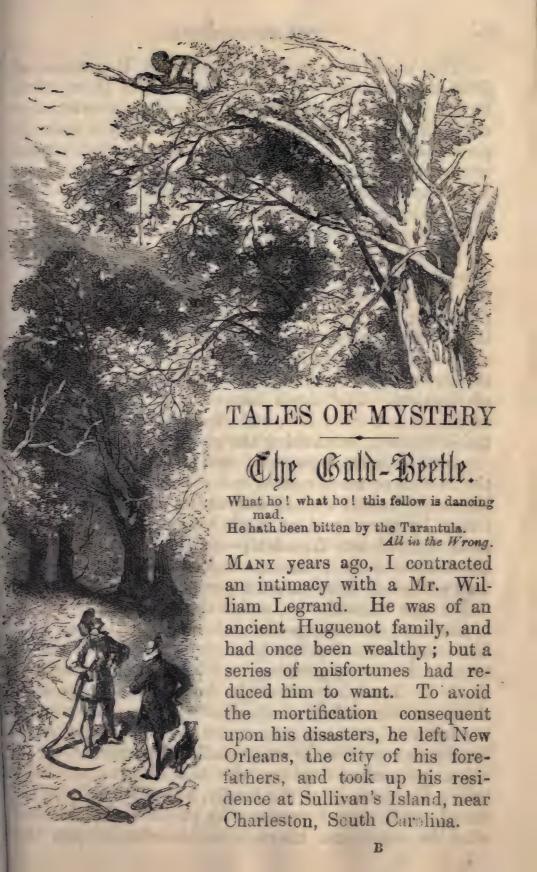
did not involve the doom of death.

He seemed, except when some fitful pursuit subjugated his will

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and engrossed his faculties, always to bear the memory of some controlling sorrow. The remarkable poem of *The Raven* was probably much more nearly than has been supposed, even by those who were very intimate with him, a reflection and an echo of his own history. *He* was that bird's

His harsh experience had deprived him of all faith, in man or woman. He had made up his mind upon the numberless complexities of the social world, and the whole system, with him, was an imposture. This conviction gave a direction to his shrewd and naturally unamiable character. Still, though he regarded society as composed altogether of villains, the sharpness of his intellect was not of that kind which enabled him to cope with villany, while it continually caused him, by overshots, to fail of the success of honesty. He was, in many respects, like Francis Vivian, in Bulwer's novel of The Caxtons. Passion, in him, comprehended many of the worst emotions which militate against human happiness. You could not contradict him, but you raised quick choler; you could not speak of wealth, but his cheek paled with gnawing envy. The astonishing natural advantages of this poor boy-his beauty, his readiness, the daring spirit that breathed around him like a fiery atmosphere—had raised his constitutional self-confidence into an arrogance that turned his very claims to admiration into prejudices against him. Irascible, envious—bad enough, but not the worst, for these salient angles were all varnished over with a cold repellant cynicism, his passions vented themselves in sneers. There seemed to him no moral susceptibility; and, what was more remarkable in a proud nature, little or nothing of the true point of honour. He had, to a morbid excess, that desire to rise which is vulgarly called ambition, but no wish for the esteem of the love of his species: only the hard wish to succeed—not shine, not serve—succeed, that he might have the right to despise a world which galled his self-conceit.



could I foresee that you would pay me a visit this very night of all others? As I was coming home I met Lieutenant G——, from the fort, and, very foolishly, I lent him the beetle; so it will be impossible for you to see it until the morning. Stay here to-night, and I will send Jup down for it at sunrise. It is the loveliest thing in creation!"

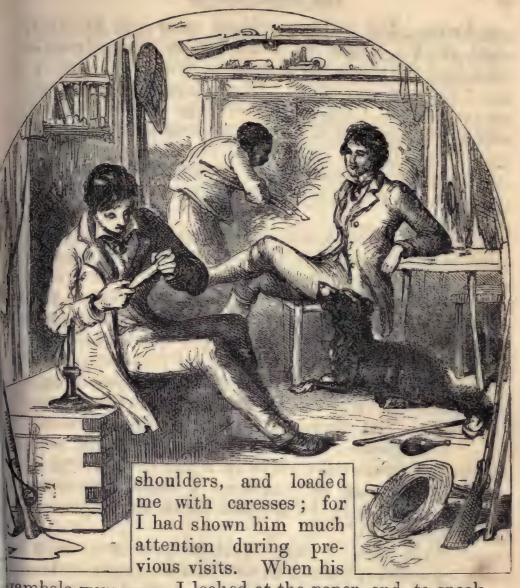
"What?-sunrise?"

"Nonsense! no!—the beetle. It is of a brilliant gold colour—about the size of a large hickory-nut—with two jet-black spots near one extremity of the back, and another, somewhat longer, at the other. The antennæ are—"

"Dey aint no tin in him, Massa Will, I keep a tellin on you," here interrupted Jupiter; "de beetle is a goole beetle, solid, ebery bit of him, inside and all, sep him wing—neber feel half so hebby a beetle in my life."

"Well, suppose it is, Jup," replied Legrand, somewhat more earnestly, it seemed to me, than the case demanded, "is that any reason for your letting the birds burn? The colour"—here he turned to me—"is really almost enough to warrant Jupiter's idea. You never saw a more brilliant metallic lustre than the scales emit—but of this you cannot judge till to-morrow. In the meantime I can give you some idea of the shape." Saying this, he seated himself at a small table, on which were a pen and ink, but no paper. He looked for some in a drawer, but found none.

"Never mind," said he at length, "this will answer;" and he drew from his waistcoat pocket a scrap of what I took to be very dirty foolscap, and made upon it a rough drawing with the pen. While he did this, I retained my seat by the fire, for I was still chilly. When the design was complete, he handed it to me without rising. As I received it, a loud growl was heard, succeeded by a scratching at the door. Jupiter opened it, and a large Newfoundland, belonging to Legrand, rushed in, leaped upon my



ne truth, found myself not a little puzzled at what

ay friend had depicted.

"Well!" I said, after contemplating it for some ninutes, "this is a strange scarabæus, I must consess: new to me: never saw anything like it before—nless it was a skull, or a death's-head—which it more early resembles than anything else that has come ader my observation."

"A death's-head!" echoed Legrand—"Oh—yes ell, it has something of that appearance upon paper no doubt. The two upper black spots look like eyes, eh? and the longer one at the bottom like a mouth—and then the shape of the whole is oval,"

"Perhaps so," said I: "but, Legrand, I fear you are no artist. I must wait until I see the beetle itself, if I am to form any idea of its personal appearance."

"Well, I don't know," said he, a little nettled, "I draw tolerably—should do it, at least—have had good masters, and flatter myself that I am not quite a blockhead."

"But, my dear fellow, you are joking then," said I; this is a very passable skull—indeed, I may say that it is a very excellent skull, according to the vulgar notions about such specimens of physiology—and your scarabæus must be the queerest scarabæus in the world if it resembles it. Why, we may get up a very thrilling bit of superstition upon this hint. I presume you will call the beetle scarabæus caput hominis; or something of that kind—there are many similar titles in the Natural Histories. But where are the antennæ you spoke of?"

"The antennæ!" said Legrand, who seemed to be getting unaccountably warm upon the subject; "I am sure you must see the antennæ. I made them as distinct as they are in the original insect, and I presume

that is sufficient."

"Well, well," I said, "perhaps you have—still I don't see them;" and I handed him the paper without additional remark, not wishing to ruffle his temper but I was much surprised at the turn affairs had taken his ill-humour puzzled me—and, as for the drawing of the beetle, there were positively no antennæ visible, and the whole did bear a very close resemblance to the ordinary cuts of a death's-head.

He received the paper very peevishly, and was about to crumple it, apparently to throw it in the fire, when a casual glance at the design seemed suddenly to river his attention. In an instant his face grew violently red—in another as excessively pale. For some minutes

he continued to scrutinize the drawing minutely where he sat. At length he arose, took a candle from the table, and proceeded to seat himself upon a sea-chest in the farthest corner of the room. Here again he made an anxious examination of the paper; turning it in all directions. He said nothing, however, and his conduct greatly astonished me; yet I thought it prudent not to exacerbate the growing moodiness of his temper by any comment. Presently he took from his coat pocket a wallet, placed the paper carefully in it, and deposited both in a writing-desk, which he locked. He now grew more composed in his demeanour; but his original air of enthusiasm had quite disappeared. Yet he seemed not so much sulky as abstracted. the evening wore away, he became more and more absorbed in reverie, from which no sallies of mine could arouse him. It had been my intention to pass the night at the hut, as I had frequently done before, but seeing my host in this mood, I deemed it proper to take leave. He did not press me to remain, but, as I departed, he shook my hand with even more than his usual cordiality.

It was about a month after this (and during the interval I had seen nothing of Legrand) when I received a visit, at Charleston, from his man, Jupiter. I had never seen the good old negro look so dispirited, and I feared that some serious disaster had befallen my

friend.

"Well, Jup," said I, "what is the matter now?—how is your master?"

"Why, to speak de troof, massa, him not so berry

well as mought be."

"Not well! I am truly sorry to hear it. What does he complain of?"

"Dar, dat's it!—him neber plain of notin—but

him berry sick for all dat."

"Very sick, Jupiter!—why didn't you say so at once? Is he confined to bed?"

"No, dat he aint! he aint find nowhar—dat's just whar de shoe pinch—my mind has got to be berry hebby bout poor Massa Will."

"Jupiter, I should like to understand what it is you are talking about. You say your master is sick."

Has n't he told you what ails him?"

"Why, massa, taint worf while for to git mad about de matter—Massa Will say noffin at all aint de matter wid him—but den what make him go about looking dis here way, wid he head down, and he soldiers up, and as white as a gose? And den he keep a syphon all de time—"

"Keeps a what, Jupiter?"

"Keeps a syphon wid de figgurs on de slate—de queerest figgurs I ebber did see. Ise gittin to be skeered, I tell you. Hab for to keep mighty tight eye pon him noovers. Todder day he gib me slip fore de sun up, and was gone de whole ob de blessed day. I had a big stick ready cut for to gib him deuced good beating when he did come—but Ise sich a fool dat I had n't de heart arter all—he look so berry poorly."

"Eh?—what?—ah, yes!—upon the whole I think you had better not be too severe with the poor fellow—don't flog him, Jupiter—he can't very well stand it—but can you form no idea of what has occasioned this illness, or rather this change of conduct? Has anything unpleasant happened since I saw you?"

"No, massa, dey aint bin noffin onpleasant since den—'twas fore den I'm feared—'twas de bery day you

was dare."

"How? what do you mean?"

"Why, massa, I mean de beetle-dare now."

"The what?"

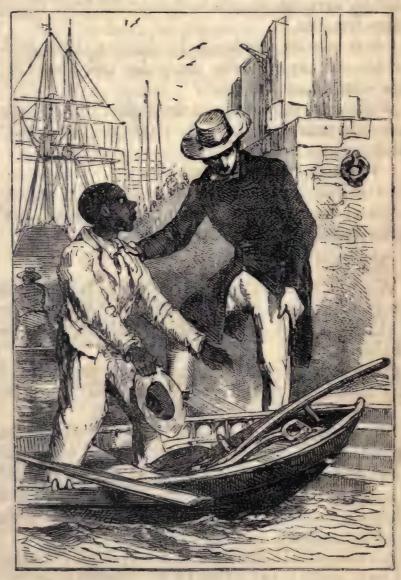
"De beetle—I'm berry sartain dat Massa Will bin bit somewhere bout de head by dat goole-beetle."

"And what cause have you, Jupiter, for such a

supposition."

"Claws enuff, massa, and mouff too. I nebber did

see sich a deuced beetle—he kick and he bite ebery ting what cum near him. Massa Will cotch him fuss, but had for to let him go gin mighty quick, I tell you—den was de time he must ha got de bite. I didn't like de



look of de beetle mouff, myself, no how, so I would n't take hold ob him wid my finger, but I cotch him wid a piece ob paper dat I found. I rap him up in de paper, and stuff piece ob it in he mouff—dat was de way."

"And you think, then, that your master was really

bitten by the beetle, and that the bite made him sick?"

"I don't tink noffin about it—I nose it. What make him dream bout de goole so much, if taint cause he bit by de goole-beetle? Ise heerd bout dem goole-beetles fore dis."

"But how do you know he dreams about gold?"

"How I know? why cause he talk about it in he

sleep-dat's how I nose."

Well, Jup, perhaps you are right; but to what fortunate circumstance am I to attribute the honour of a visit from you to-day?"

"What de matter, massa?"

"Did you bring any message from Mr. Legrand?"

"No, massa, I bring dis here pissel;" and here Jupiter handed me a note, which ran thus:

MY DEAR-

Why have I not seen you for so long a time? I hope you have not been so foolish as to take offence at any little brusquerie of mine; but no, that is improbable.

Since I saw you I have had great cause for anxiety. I have something to tell you, yet scarcely know how to

tell it, or whether I should tell it at all.

I have not been quite well for some days past, and poor old Jup annoys me, almost beyond endurance, by his well-meant attentions. Would you believe it?—he had prepared a huge stick, the other day, with which to chastise me for giving him the slip, and spending the day, solus, among the hills on the main land. I verily believe that my ill looks alone saved me a flogging.

I have made no addition to my cabinet since we met. If you can, in any way, make it convenient, come over with Jupiter. Do come. I wish to see you tonight, upon business of importance. I assure you that

it is of the highest importance.

Ever yours, WILLIAM LEGRAND.

There was something in the tone of this note which gave me great uneasiness. Its whole style differed materially from that of Legrand. What could he be dreaming of? What new crotchet possessed his excitable brain? What "business of the highest importance" could he possibly have to transact? Jupiter's account of him boded no good,—I dreaded lest the continued pressure of misfortune had, at length, fairly unsettled the reason of my friend. Without a moment's hesitation, therefore, I prepared to accompany the negro.

Upon reaching the wharf, I noticed a scythe and three spades, all apparently new, lying in the bottom

of the boat in which we were to embark.

"What is the meaning of all this, Jup?" I inquired.

"Him syfe, massa, and spade."

"Very true; but what are they doing here?"

"Him de syfe and de spade what Massa Will sis pon my buying for him in de town, and de debbil's own lot ob money I had to gib for em."

"But what, in the name of all that is mysterious, is your 'Massa Will' going to do with scythes and

spades?"

"Dat's more den I know, and debbil take me if I do n't blieve 't is more dan he know, too. But it's all cum ob de beetle."

Finding that no satisfaction was to be obtained of Jupiter, whose whole intellect seemed to be absorbed by "de beetle," I now stepped into the boat and made sail. With a fair and strong breeze we soon ran into the little cove to the northward of Fort Moultrie, and a walk of some two miles brought us to the hut. It was about three in the afternoon when we arrived. Legrand had been awaiting us in eager expectation. He grasped my hand with a nervous empressement, which alarmed me and strengthened the suspicions already entertained. His countenance was pale even to ghast-liness, and his deep-set eyes glared with unnatural lustre. After some inquiries respecting his health, I

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asked him, not knowing what better to say, if he had yet obtained the scarabæus from Lieutenant G-

"Oh, yes," he replied, colouring violently, "I got it from him the next morning. Nothing should tempt me to part with that scarabæus. Do you know that Jupiter is quite right about it?"

"In what way?" I asked, with a sad foreboding at

heart.

"In supposing it to be a beetle of real gold." He said this with an air of profound seriousness, and I felt

inexpressibly shocked.

"This beetle is to make my fortune," he continued, with a triumphant smile,—"to reinstate me in my family possessions. Is it any wonder, then, that I prize it? Since Fortune has thought fit to bestow it upon me, I have only to use it properly, and I shall arrive at the gold of which it is the index. Jupiter, bring me that scarabæus."

"What! de beetle, massa? I'd rudder not go fer trubble dat beetle-you mus git him for your own self." Hereupon Legrand arose, with a grave and stately air, and brought me the beetle from a glass case in which it was enclosed. It was a beautiful scarabæus, and at that time unknown to naturalists-of course a great prize in a scientific point of view. There were two round, black spots near one extremity of the back, and a long one near the other. The scales were exceedingly hard and glossy, with all the appearance of burnished gold. The weight of the insect was very remarkable, and, taking all things into consideration, I could hardly blame Jupiter for his opinion respecting it; but what to make of Legrand's concordance with that opinion, I could not, for the life of me, tell.

"I sent for you," said he, in a grandiloquent tone, when I had completed my examination of the beetle,-"I sent for you, that I might have your counsel and assistance in furthering the views of Fate and of the

beetle-"

"My dear Legrand," I cried, interrupting him, "you are certainly unwell, and had better use some little precautions. You shall go to bed, and I will remain with you a few days, until you get over this. You are feverish and——"

"Feel my pulse," said he.

I felt it, and, to say the truth, found not the slightest indication of fever.

"But you may be ill and yet have no fever. Allow me this once to prescribe for you. In the first place,

go to bed. In the next"-

"You are mistaken," he interposed; "I am as well as I can expect to be under the excitement which I suffer. If you really wish me well, you will relieve this excitement."

"And how is this to be done?"

"Very easily. Jupiter and myself are going upon an expedition into the hills, upon the main land, and, in this expedition we shall need the aid of some person in whom we can confide. You are the only one we can trust. Whether we succeed or fail, the excitement which you now perceive in me will be equally allayed."

"I am anxious to oblige you in any way," I replied; "but do you mean to say that this infernal beetle has any connection with your expedition into the hills?"

"It has."

"Then, Legrand, I can become a party to no such absurd proceeding."

"I am sorry-very sorry-for we shall have to try

it by ourselves."

"Try it by yourselves! The man is surely mad!—but stay!—how long do you propose to be absent?"

"Probably all night. We shall start immediately,

and be back, at all events, by surrise."

"And will you promise me, upon your honour, that when this freak of yours is over, and the beetle business (good God!) settled to your satisfaction, you will then return home and follow my advice implicitly, as that of your physician?"

"Yes: I promise; and now let us be off, for we

have no time to lose."

With a heavy heart I accompanied my friend. We started about four o'clock-Legrand, Jupiter, the dog, and myself. Jupiter had with him the scythe and spades—the whole of which he insisted upon carrying -more through fear, it seemed to me, of trusting either of the implements within reach of his master. than from any excess of industry or complaisance. His demeanour was dogged in the extreme, and "dat deuced beetle" were the sole words which escaped his lips during the journey. For my own part, I had charge of a couple of dark lanterns, while Legrand contented himself with the scarabæus, which he carried attached to the end of a bit of whip-cord; twirling it to and fro with the air of a conjuror, as he went. When I observed this last plain evidence of my friend's aberration of mind, I could scarcely refrain from tears. thought it best, however, to humour his fancy, at least for the present, or until I could adopt some more energetid measures with a chance of success. In the mean time I endeavoured, but all in vain, to sound him in regard to the object of the expedition. Having succeeded ir inducing me to accompany him, he seemed unwilling to hold conversation upon any topic of minor importance and to all my questions vouchsafed no other reply than " we shall see!"

We crossed the creek at the head of the island by means of a skiff, and ascending the high grounds of the shore of the main land, proceeded in a northwesterly direction through a tract of country excessively wild and desolate, where no trace of a human footstep wa to be seen. Legrand led the way with decision; pausing only for an instant, here and there, to consult what appeared to be certain landmarks of his own contrivance upon a former occasion.

In this manner we journeyed for about two hours, and the sun was just setting when we entered a region infinitely more dreary than any yet seen. It was a species of table land, near the summit of an almost inaccessible hill, densely wooded from base to pinnacle, and interspersed with huge crags that appeared to lie loosely upon the soil, and in many cases were prevented from precipitating themselves into the valleys below, merely by the support of the trees against which they reclined. Deep ravines, in various directions, gave an

air of still sterner solemnity to the scene.

The natural platform to which we had clambered was thickly overgrown with brambles, through which we soon discovered that it would have been impossible to force our way but for the scythe; and Jupiter, by direction of his master, proceeded to clear for us a path to the foot of an enormously tall tulip-tree, which stood, with some eight or ten oaks, upon the level, and far surpassed them all, and all other trees which I had then ever seen, in the beauty of its foliage and form, in the wide spread of its branches, and in the general majesty of its appearance. When we reached this tree, Legrand turned to Jupiter, and asked him if he thought he could climb it. The old man seemed a little staggered by the question, and for some moments made no reply. At length he approached the huge trunk, walked slowly around it, and examined it with minute attention. When he had completed his scrutiny, he merely said:

"Yes, massa, Jup climb any tree he eber see in he

life."

"Then up with you as soon as possible, for it will soon be too dark to see what we are about."

"How far mus go up, massa?" inquired Jupiter.

"Get up the main trunk first, and then I will tell you which way to go—and here—stop! take this beetle with you."

"De beetle, Massa Will!—de goole beetle!" cried

the negro, drawing back in dismay-" what for mus tote

de beetle way up de tree ?-d-n if I do!"

"If you are afraid, Jup, a great big negro like you, to take hold of a harmless little dead beetle, why you can carry it up by this string—but, if you do not take it up with you in some way, I shall be under the necessity of breaking your head with this shovel."

"What de matter now, massa?" said Jup, evidently shamed into compliance; "always want for to raise fuss wid old nigger. Was only funnin any how. Me feered de beetle! what I keer for de beetle?" Here he took cautiously hold of the extreme end of the string, and, maintaining the insect as far from his person as circumstances would permit, prepared to ascend the tree.

In youth, the tulip-tree, or Liriodendron Tulipiferum, the most magnificent of American foresters. has a trunk peculiarly smooth, and often rises to a great height without lateral branches; but, in its riper age, the bark becomes gnarled and uneven, while many short limbs make their appearance on the stem. Thus the difficulty of ascension, in the present case, lay more in semblance than in reality. Embracing the huge cylinder, as closely as possible, with his arms and knees, seizing with his hands some projections, and resting his naked toes upon others, Jupiter, after one or two narrow escapes from falling, at length wriggled himself into the first great fork, and seemed to consider the whole business as virtually accomplished. risk of the achievement was, in fact, now over, although the climber was some sixty or seventy feet from the ground.

"Which way mus go now, Massa Will?" he asked.

"Keep up the largest branch—the one on this side," said Legrand. The negro obeyed him promptly, and apparently with but little trouble; ascending higher and higher, until no glimpse of his squat figure could be obtained through the dense foliage which enveloped it. Presently his voice was heard in a sort of halloo.

"How much fudder is got for go?"

"How high up are you?" asked Legrand.
"Ebber so fur," replied the negro; "can see de

sky fru de top ob de tree."

"Never mind the sky, but attend to what I say. Look down the trunk and count the limbs below you on this side. How many limbs have you passed?"

"One, two, three, four, fibe-I done pass fibe big

limb, massa, pon dis side."

"Then go one limb higher."

In a few minutes the voice was heard again,

announcing that the seventh limb was attained.

"Now, Jup," cried Legrand, evidently much excited, "I want you to work your way out upon that limb as far as you can. If you see anything strange, let me know."

By this time what little doubt I might have entertained of my poor friend's insanity, was put finally at rest. I had no alternative but to conclude him. stricken with lunacy, and I became seriously anxious about getting him home. While I was pondering upon what was best to be done, Jupiter's voice was. again heard.

"Mos feerd for to ventur pon dis limb berry far-

tis dead limb putty much all de way."

"Did you say it was a dead limb, Jupiter?" cried

Legrand in a quavering voice.

"Yes, massa, him dead as de door-nail-done up for sartain-done departed dis here life."

"What in the name of heaven shall I do?" asked

Legrand, seemingly in the greatest distress.

"Do!" said I, glad of an opportunity to interpose a word, "why come home and go to bed. Come now!that's a fine fellow. It's getting late, and, besides, you remember your promise."

"Jupiter," cried he, without heeding me in the

least, "do you hear me?"

"Yes, Massa Will, hear you ebber so plain."

"I'ry the wood well, then, with your knife, and see

if you think it very rotten."

"Him rotten, massa, sure nuff," replied the negro in a few moments, "but not so berry rotten as mought be. Mought venture out leetle way pon de limb by myself, dat's true."

"By yourself!—what do you mean?"

"Why I mean de beetle. 'Tis berry hebby beetle. Spose I drop him down fuss, and den de limb won't

break wid just de weight ob one nigger."

"You infernal scoundrel!" cried Legrand, apparently much relieved, "what do you mean by telling me such nonsense as that? As sure as you drop that beetle I'll break your neck. Look here, Jupiter, do you hear me?"

"Yes, massa, needn't hollo at poor nigger dat style."

"Well! now listen!—if you will venture out on the limb as far as you think safe, and not let go the beetle, I'll make you a present of a silver dollar as soon as you get down,"

"I'm gwine, Massa Will-deed I is," replied the

negro very promptly-" mos out to the eend now."

"do you say you are out to the end of that limb?"

"Soon be to de end, massa, -o-o-o-o-oh! Lor-gol-

a-marcy! what is dis here pon de tree?"

"Well," cried Legrand, highly delighted, "what is

"Why taint noffin but a skull—somebody bin lef him head up de tree, and de crows done gobble ebery bit ob de meat off."

"A skull you say !- very well !- how is it fastened

to the limb?—what holds it on?"

"Sure nuff, massa; mus look. Why dis berry curous sarcumstance, pon my word—dare's a great big nail in de skull, what fastens ob it on to de tree."

"Well, now, Jupiter, do exactly as I tell you-do

you hear?"

"Yes, massa."

"Pay attention, then!—find the left eye of the skull."

"Hum! hoo! dat's good! why dare aint no eye lef at all."

"Curse your stupidity! do you know your righthand from your left?"

"Yes, I nose dat-nose all bout dat-tis my lef

hand what I chops de wood wid."

"To be sure! you are left-handed; and your left eye is on the same side as your left hand. Now, I suppose you can find the left eye of the skull, or the place where the left eye has been. Have you found it?"

Here was a long pause. At length the negro asked:

"Is de lef eye of de skull pon de same side as de lef hand of de skull, too?—cause de skull aint got not a bit ob a hand at all—nebber mind! I got de lef eye now—here de lef eye! what mus do wid it?"

"Let the beetle drop through it, as far as the string will reach—but be careful and not let go your

hold of the string."

"All dat done, Massa Will; mighty easy ting for to put de beetle fru de hole—look out for him dare below!"

During this colloquy no portion of Jupiter's person could be seen; but the beetle, which he had suffered to descend, was now visible at the end of the string, and glistened, like a globe of burnished gold, in the last rays of the setting sun, some of which still faintly illumined the eminence upon which we stood. The scarabaus hung quite clear of any branches, and, if allowed to fall, would have fallen at our feet. Legrand immediately took the scythe, and cleared with it a circular space, three or four yards in diameter, just beneath the insect, and, having accomplished this, ordered Jupiter to let go the string and come down from the tree.

Driving a peg, with great nicety, into the ground, at the precise spot where the beetle fell, my friend now produced from his pocket a tape-measure. Fastening one end of this at that point of the trunk of the tree which was nearest the peg, he unrolled it till it reached the peg, and thence farther unrolled it, in the direction already established by the two points of the tree and the peg, for the distance of fifty feet—Jupiter clearing away the brambles with the scythe. At the spot thus attained a second peg was driven, and about this, as a centre, a rude circle, about four feet in diameter, described. Taking now a spade himself, and giving one to Jupiter and one to me, Legrand begged

us to set about digging as quickly as possible.

To speak the truth, I had no especial relish for such amusement at any time, and, at that particular moment, would most willingly have declined it; for the night was coming on, and I felt much fatigued with the exercise already taken; but I saw no mode of escape, and was fearful of disturbing my poor friend's equanimity by a refusal. Could I have depended, indeed, upon Jupiter's aid, I would have had no hesitation in attempting to get the lunatic home by force; but I was too well assured of the old negro's disposition, to hope that he would assist me, under any circumstances, in a personal contest with his master. I made no doubt that the latter had been infected with some of the innumerable Southern superstitions about money buried, and that his phantasy had received confirmation by the finding of the scarabæus, or, perhaps, by Jupiter's obstinacy in maintaining it to be "a beetle of real gold." A mind disposed to lunacy would readily be led away by such suggestions—especially if chiming in with favourite preconceived ideas-and then I called to mind the poor fellow's speech about the beetle's being "the index of his fortune." Upon the whole, I was sadly vexed and puzzled, but at length I concluded to make a virtue of necessity—to dig with a good will, and thus the sooner to convince the visionary, by ocular demonstration, of

the fallacy of the opinions he entertained.

The lanterns having been lit, we all fell to work with a zeal worthy a more rational cause; and as the glare fell upon our persons and implements, I could not help thinking how picturesque a group we composed, and how strange and suspicious our labours must have appeared to any interloper who, by chance, might have stumbled upon our whereabouts.

We dug very steadily for two hours. Little was said; and our chief embarrassment lay in the yelpings of the dog, who took exceeding interest in our proceedings. He at length became so obstreperous that we grew fearful of his giving the alarm to some stragglers in the vicinity;—or, rather, this was the apprehension of Legrand;—for myself, I should have rejoiced at any interruption which might have enabled me to get the wanderer home. The noise was at length very effectually silenced by Jupiter, who, getting out of the hole with a dogged air of deliberation, tied the brute's mouth up with one of his suspenders, and then

returned, with a grave chuckle, to his task.

When the time mentioned had expired, we had reached a depth of five feet, and yet no signs of any treasure became manifest. A general pause ensued, and I began to hope that the farce was at an end. Legrand, however, although evidently much disconcerted, wiped his brow thoughtfully and recommenced. We had excavated the entire circle of four feet diameter. and now we slightly enlarged the limit, and went to the farther depth of two feet. Still nothing appeared. The gold-seeker, whom I sincerely pitied, at length clambered from the pit, with the bitterest disappointment imprinted upon every feature, and proceeded, slowly and reluctantly, to put on his coat, which he had thrown off at the beginning of his labour. In the mean time I made no remark. Jupiter, at a signal from his master, began to gather up his tools. This done, and the dog having been unmuzzled, we turned

in profound silence towards home.

We had taken, perhaps, a dozen steps in this direction, when, with a loud oath, Legrand strode up to Jupiter, and seized him by the collar. The astonished negro opened his eyes and mouth to the fullest extent, let fall the spades, and fell upon his knees.

"You scoundrel!" said Legrand, hissing out the syllables from between his clenched teeth—"you infernal black villain!—speak, I tell you!—answer me this instant, without prevarieation!—which—which is

your left eye?"

"Oh, my golly, Massa Will; aint dis here my lef eye for sartain?" roared the terrified Jupiter, placing his hand upon his *right* organ of vision, and holding it there with a desperate pertinacity, as if in immediate

dread of his master's attempt at a gouge.

"I thought so!—I knew it! hurrah!" vociferated Legrand, letting the negro go, and executing a series of curvets and caracels, much to the astonishment of his valet, who, arising from his knees, looked mutely from his master to myself, and then from myself to his master.

"Come! we must go back," said the latter; "the game's not up yet;" and he again led the way to the tulip-tree.

"Jupiter," said he, when we reached its foot, "come here! was the skull nailed to the limb with the

face outwards, or with the face to the limb?"

"De face was out, massa, so dat de crows could get

at de eves good, widout any troublé."

"Well, then, was it this eye or that through which you dropped the beetle?"—here Legrand touched each of Jupiter's eyes.

"T was dis eye, massa—de lef eye—jis as you tell me;" and here it was his right eye that the negro

indicated.

[&]quot;That will do- we must try it again."

Here my friend, about whose madness I now saw, or fancied that I saw, certain indications of method, removed the peg which marked the spot where the beetle fell, to a spot about three inches to the westward of its former position. Taking now the tape-measure from the nearest point of the trunk to the peg, as before, and continuing the extension in a straight line to the distance of fifty feet, a spot was indicated, removed by several yards from the point at which we

had been digging.

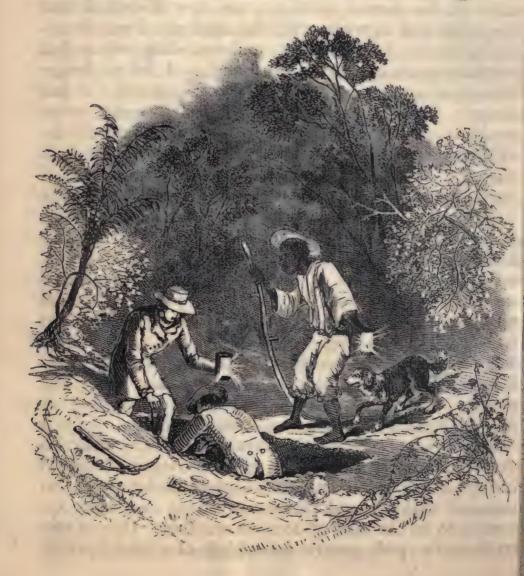
Around the new position a circle, somewhat larger than in the former instance, was now described, and we again set to work with the spades. I was dreadfully weary, but, scarcely understanding what had occasioned the change in my thoughts, I felt no longer any great aversion from the labour imposed. I had become most unaccountably interested - nay, even excited. Perhaps there was something amid all the extravagant demeanour of Legrand-some air of forethought, or of deliberation—which impressed me. I dug eagerly, and now and then caught myself actually looking, with something that very much resembled expectation, for the fancied treasure, the vision of which had demented my unfortunate companion. At a period when such vagaries of thought most, fully possessed me, and when we had been at work perhaps an hour and a half, we were again interrupted by the violent howlings of the dog. His uneasiness, in the first instance had been evidently, but the result of playfulness or caprice, but he now assumed a hitter and serious tone. Upon Jupiter's again, attempting to muzzle him, he made furious resistance, and, leaping into the hole, tore up the mould frantically with his claws. In a few seconds he had uncovered a mass of numan bones, forming two complete skeletons, interningled with several buttons of metal, and what appeared to be the dust of decayed woollen. Gue or two trokes of a spade upturned the blade of a large Spanish

knife, and as we dug farther, three or four loose pieces

of gold and silver coin came to light.

At sight of these the joy of Jupiter could scarcely be restrained, but the countenance of his master wore an air of extreme disappointment. He urged us, however, to continue our exertions, and the words were hardly uttered when I stumbled and fell forward, having caught the toe of my boot in a large ring of iron that lay half-buried in the loose earth.

We now worked in earnest, and never did I pass ten minutes of more intense excitement. During this



interval, we had fairly unearthed an oblong chest of wood, which, from its perfect preservation and wonderful hardness, had plainly been subjected to some mineralizing process—perhaps that of the bi-chloride of mercury. This box was three feet and a half long, three feet broad, and two and a half feet deep. It was firmly secured by bands of wrought iron, riveted, and forming a kind of open trellis-work over the whole. On each side of the chest, near the top, were three rings of iron-six in all-by means of which a firm hold could be obtained by six persons. Our utmost united endeavours served only to disturb the coffer very slightly in its bed. We at once saw the impossibility of removing so great a weight. Luckily, the sole fastenings of the lid consisted of two sliding bolts. These we drew back - trembling and panting with anxiety. In an instant, a treasure of incalculable value lay gleaming before us. As the rays of the lanterns fell within the pit, there flashed upwards a glow and a glare, from a confused heap of gold and of jewels, that absolutely dazzled our eyes.

I shall not pretend to describe the feelings with which I gazed. Amazement was, of course, predominant. Legrand appeared exhausted with excitement, and spoke very few words. Jupiter's countenance wore, for some minutes, as deadly a pallor as it is possible, in the nature of things, for any negro's visage to assume. He seemed stupified—thunder-stricken. Presently he fell upon his knees in the pit, and burying his naked arms up to the elbows in gold, let them there remain, as if enjoying the luxury of a bath. At length, with a

deep sigh, he exclaimed, as if in a soliloquy:

"And dis all cum ob de goole-beetle? de putty goole-beetle! de poor little goole-beetle, what I boosed in dat sabage kind ob style! Aint you shamed ob yourself, nigger?—answer me dat?"

It became necessary at last that I should arouse both master and valet to the expediency of removing

the treasure. It was growing late, and it behoved us to make exertion, that we might get everything housed before daylight. It was difficult to say what should be done, and much time was spent in deliberationso confused were the ideas of all. We finally lightened the box by removing two-thirds of its contents, when we were enabled, with some trouble, to raise it from the hole. The articles taken out were deposited among the brambles, and the dog left to guard them, with strict orders from Jupiter neither, upon any pretence, to stir from the spot, nor to open his mouth until our return. We then hurriedly made for home with the chest; reaching the hut in safety, but after excessive toil, at one o'clock in the morning. Worn out as we were, it was not in human nature to do more immediately. We rested until two, and had supper; starting for the hills immediately afterwards, armed with three stout sacks, which by good luck were upon the premises. A little before four we arrived at the pit, divided the remainder of the booty as equally as might be among us, and, leaving the holes unfilled, again set out for the hut, at which, for the second time, we deposited our golden burthens, just as the first faint streaks of the dawn gleamed from over the treetops in the East.

We were now thoroughly broken down; but the intense excitement of the time denied us repose. After an unquiet slumber of some three or four hours' duration, we arose, as if by preconcert, to make examination

of our treasure.

The chest had been full to the brim, and we spent the whole day, and the greater part of the next night, in a scrutiny of its contents. There had been nothing like order or arrangement: everything had been heaped in promiscuously. Having assorted all with care, we found ourselves possessed of even vaster wealth than we had at first supposed. In coin there was rather more than four hundred and fifty thousand

dollars-estimating the value of the pieces as accurately as we could by the tables of the period. There was not a particle of silver. All was gold of antique date and of great variety—French, Spanish, and German money, with a few English guineas, and some counters, of which we had never seen specimens before. There were several very large and heavy coins, so worn that we could make nothing of their inscriptions. There was no American money. The value of the jewels we found more difficulty in estimating. There were diamonds—some of them exceedingly large and fine—a hundred and ten in all, and not one of them small; eighteen rubies of remarkable brilliancy; three hundred and ten emeralds, all very beautiful; and twenty-one sapphires, with an opal. These stones had all been broken from their settings and thrown loose in the chest. The settings themselves, which we picked out from among the other gold, appeared to have been beaten up with hammers, as if to prevent identification. Besides all this, there was a vast quantity of solid gold ornaments; -nearly two hundred massive finger and ear rings; rich chains-thirty of these, if I remember; eighty-three very large and heavy crucifixes; five gold censers of great value; a prodigious golden punch-bowl, ornamented with richly chased vine-leaves and Bacchanalian figures; with two sword-handles exquisitely embossed, and many other smaller articles which I cannot recollect. The weight of these valuables exceeded three hundred and fifty pounds avoirdupois; and in this estimate I have not included one hundred and ninety-seven superb gold watches; three of the number being worth each five hundred dollars, if one. Many of them were very old. and, as time-keepers, valueless, the works having suffered, more or less, from corrosion; but all were richly jewelled, and in cases of great worth. We estimated the entire contents of the chest, that night, at a million and a half of dollars; and, upon the subsequent disposal of the trinkets and jewels (a few being retained for our own use), it was found that we had greatly undervalued the treasure.

When at length we had concluded our examination, and the intense excitement of the time had, in some measure, subsided, Legrand, who saw that I was dying with impatience for a solution of this most extraordinary riddle, entered into a full detail of all the circumstances connected with it.

"You remember," said he, "the night when I handed you the rough sketch I had made of the scarabæus. You recollect also, that I became quite vexed at you for insisting that my drawing resembled a death's head. When you first made this assertion, I thought you were jesting; but afterwards I called to mind the peculiar spots on the back of the insect, and admitted to myself that your remark had some little foundation in fact. Still, the sneer at my graphic powers irritated me, for I am considered a good artist, and therefore, when you handed me the scrap of parchment, I was about to crumple it up and throw it angrily into the fire."

"The scrap of paper, you mean," said I.

"No; it had much of the appearance of paper, and at first I supposed it to be such, but when I came to draw upon it, I discovered it at once to be a piece of very thin parchment. It was quite dirty, you remember. Well, as I was in the very act of crumpling it up, my glance fell upon the sketch at which you had been looking, and you may imagine my astonishment when I perceived, in fact, the figure of a death's-head just where it seemed to me I had made the drawing of the beetle. For a moment I was too much amazed to think with accuracy. I knew that my design was very different in detail from this, although there was a certain similarity in general outline. Presently I took a candle, and seating myself at the other end of the room, proceeded to scrutinize the parchment more

closely. Upon turning it over, I saw my own sketch upon the reverse, just as I had made it. My first idea, now, was mere surprise at the really remarkable similarity of outline, at the singular coincidence involved in the fact that, unknown to me, there should have been a scull upon the other side of the parchment, immediately beneath my figure of the scarabaus, and that this scull, not only in outline, but in size should so closely resemble my drawing. I say the singularity of this coincidence absolutely stupified me for a time. This is the usual effect of such coincidences. The mind struggles to establish a connection—a sequence of cause and effect-and, being unable to do so, suffers a species of temporary paralysis. But, when I recovered from this stupor, there dawned upon me gradually a conviction which startled me even far more than the coincidence. I began distinctly, positively, to remember that there had been no drawing upon the parchment when I made my sketch of the scarabæus. I became perfectly certain of this; for I recollected turning up first one side and then the other, in search of the cleanest spot. Had the scull been then there, of course I could not have failed to notice it. Here was indeed a mystery which I felt it impossible to explain; but, even at that early moment, there seemed to glimmer faintly, within the most remote and secret chambers of my intellect, a glow-worm like conception of that truth which last night's adventure brought to so magnificent a demonstration. I arose at once, and putting the parchment securely away, dismissed all farther reflection until I should be alone.

"When you had gone, and when Jupiter was fast asleep, I betook myself to a more methodical investigation of the affair. In the first place I considered the manner in which the parchment had come into my possession. The spot where we discovered the scarabæus was on the coast of the main land, about a mile eastward of the island, and but a short distance above high-

water mark. Upon my taking hold of it, it gave me a sharp bite, which caused me to let it drop. Jupiter, with his accustomed caution, before seizing the insect, which had flown towards him, looked about him for a leaf, or something of that nature, by which to take hold of it. It was at this moment that his eyes, and mine also, fell upon the scrap of parchment, which I then supposed to be paper. It was lying half buried in the sand, a corner sticking up. Near the spot where we found it, I observed the remnants of the hull of what appeared to have been a ship's long-boat. The wreck seemed to have been there for a very great while; for the resemblance to boat timbers could scarcely be traced.

"Well, Jupiter picked up the parchment, wrapped 'the beetle in it, and gave it to me. Soon afterwards we turned to go home, and on the way met Lieutenant G-. I showed him the insect, and he begged me to let him take it to the fort. Upon my consenting, he thrust it forthwith into his waistcoat pocket, without the parchment in which it had been wrapped, and which I had continued to hold in my hand during his inspection. Perhaps he dreaded my changing my mind, and thought it best to make sure of the prize at once: you know how enthusiastic he is on all subjects connected with Natural History. At the same time, without being conscious of it, I must have deposited the parchment in my own pocket.

"You remember that when I went to the table for the purpose of making a sketch of the beetle, I found no paper where it was usually kept. I looked in the drawer, and found none there. I searched my pockets, hoping to find an old letter, when my hand fell upon the parchment. I thus detail the precise mode in which it came into my possession; for the circumstances impressed me with peculiar force.

" No doubt you will think me fanciful, but I had already established a kind of connection. I had put together two lengths of a great chain. There was a boat lying upon a sea-coast, and not far from the boat was a parchment—not a paper—with a skull depicted upon it. You will, of course, ask 'where is the connection?' I reply that the skull, or death's-head, is the well-known emblem of the pirate. The flag of the

death's-head is hoisted in all engagements.

"I have said that the scrap was parchment, and not paper. Parchment is durable—almost imperishable. Matters of little moment are rarely consigned to parchment; since, for the mere ordinary purposes of drawing or writing, it is not nearly so well adapted as paper. This reflection suggested some meaning—some relevancy—in the death's-head. I did not fail to observe, also, the form of the parchment. Although one of its corners had been, by some accident, destroyed, it could be seen that the original form was oblong. It was just such a slip, indeed, as might have been chosen for a memorandum—for a record of something to be long remembered and carefully preserved."

"But," I interposed, "you say that the skull was not upon the parchment when you made the drawing of the beetle. How then do you trace any connection between the boat and the skull, since this latter, according to your own admission, must have been designed (God only knows how or by whom) at some period subsequent to your sketching the scarabæus?"

"Ah, hereupon turns the whole mystery; although the secret, at this point, I had comparatively little difficulty in solving. My steps were sure, and could afford but a single result. I reasoned, for example, thus: when I drew the scarabaus, there was no skull apparent upon the parchment. When I had completed the drawing, I gave it to you, and observed you narrowly until you returned it. You therefore did not design the skull, and no one else was present to do it. Then it was not done by human agency. And nevertheless it was done.

" At this stage of my reflections I endeavoured to remember, and did remember, with entire distinctness, every incident which occurred about the period in question. The weather was chilly (oh, rare and happy accident!), and a fire was blazing upon the hearth. I was heated with exercise and sat near the table. You. however, had drawn a chair close to the chimney. Just as I placed the parchment in your hand, and as you were in the act of inspecting it, Wolf, the Newfoundland, entered, and leaped upon your shoulders. With your left hand you caressed him and kept him off, while your right, holding the parchment, was permitted to fall listlessly between your knees, and in close proximity to the fire. At one moment I thought the blaze had caught it, and was about to caution you, but, before I could speak, you had withdrawn it, and were engaged in its examination. When I considered all these particulars, I doubted not for a moment that heat had been the agent in bringing to light upon the parchment the skull which I saw depicted upon it. You are well aware that chemical preparations exist, and have existed time out of mind, by means of which it is possible to write upon either paper or vellum, so that the characters shall become visible only when subjected to the action of fire. Zaffre, digested in aqua regia, and diluted with four times its weight of water, is sometimes employed: a green tint results. The regulus of cobalt, dissolved in spirit of nitre, gives a red. These colours disappear at longer or shorter intervals after the material written upon cools, but again become apparent upon the reapplication of heat.

I now scrutinized the death's-head with care. Its outer edges—the edges of the drawing nearest the edge of the vellum—were far more distinct than the others. It was clear that the action of the caloric had been imperfect or unequal. I immediately kindled a fire, and subjected every portion of the parchment to a glowing heat. At first, the only effect was the strengthening of



the faint lines in the skull; but, upon persevering in the experiment, there became visible, at the corner of the slip, diagonally opposite to the spot in which the death's-head was delineated, the figure of what I at first supposed to be a goat. A closer scrutiny, however, satisfied me that it was intended for a kid."

"Ha! ha!" said I, "to be sure I have no right to laugh at you—a million and a half of money is too serious a matter for mirth—but you are about to establish a third link in your chain—you will not find any especial connection between your pirates and a goat—pirates, you know, have nothing to do with goats; they appertain to the farming interest."

"But I have just said that the figure was not that

of a goat."

"Well, a kid, then-pretty much the same thing."

"You may have heard of one Captain Kidd. I at once looked upon the figure of the animal as a kind of punning or hieroglyphical signature. I say signature, because its position upon the vellum suggested this idea. The death's-head at the corner diagonally opposite, had, in the same manner, the air of a stamp, or seal. But I was sorely put out by the absence of all else—of the body to my imagined instrument—of the text for my context."

"I presume you expected to find a letter between

the stamp and the signature."

"Something of that kind. The fact is, I felt irresistibly impressed with a presentiment of some vast good fortune impending. I can scarcely say why. Perhaps, after all, it was rather a desire than an actual belief. But do you know that Jupiter's silly words, about the beetle being of solid gold, had a remarkable effect upon my fancy? And then the series of accidents and coincidences—these were so very extraordinary. Do you observe how mere an accident it was that these events should have occurred upon the sole day of all the year in which it has been, or may be, sufficiently cool for fire, and that without the fire, or without the intervention of the dog at the precise moment in which he appeared, I should never have become aware of the death's-head, and so never the possessor of the treasure?"

"But proceed—I am all impatience."

"Well; you have heard, of course, the many stories current—the thousand vague rumours afloat about money buried, somewhere upon the Atlantic coast, by Kidd and his associates. These rumours must have had some foundation in fact. And that the rumours have existed so long and so continuous, could have resulted, it appeared to me, only from the circumstance of the buried treasure still remaining entombed. Had Kidd concealed his plunder for a time, and afterwards reclaimed it, the rumours would scarcely have reached us in their

present unvarying form. You will observe that the stories told are all about money-seekers, not about money-finders. Had the pirate recovered his money, there the affair would have dropped. It seemed to me that some accident—say the loss of a momorandum indicating its locality—had deprived him of the means of recovering it, and that this accident had become known to his followers, who otherwise might never have heard that treasure had been concealed at all, and who, busying themselves in vain, because unguided attempts to regain it, had given first birth, and then universal currency to the reports which are now so common. Have you ever heard of any important treasure being unearthed along the coast?"

"Never."

"But that Kidd's accumulations were immense, is well known. I took it for granted, therefore, that the earth still held them; and you will scarcely be surprised when I tell you that I felt a hope, nearly amounting to certainty, that the parchment so strangely found involved a lost record of the place of deposit."

"But how did you proceed?"

"I held the vellum again to the fire, after increasing the heat; but nothing appeared. I now thought it possible that the coating of dirt might have something to do with the failure; so I carefully rinsed the parchment by pouring warm water over it, and, upon having done this, I placed it in a tin pan, with the skull downwards, and put the pan upon a furnace of lighted charcoal. In a few minutes, the pan having become thoroughly heated, I removed the slip, and to my inexpressible joy, found it spotted, in several places, with what appeared to be figures arranged in lines. Again I placed it in the pan, and suffered it to remain another minute. Upon taking it off, the whole was just as you see it now."

Here Legrand, having re-heated the parchment, submitted it to my inspection. The following charac-

ters were rudely traced, in a red tint, between the death's-head and the goat:

53\\dagger\dagge

"But," said I, returning him the slip, "I am as much in the dark as ever. Were all the jewels of Golconda awaiting me upon my solution of this enigma, I am quite sure that I should be unable to earn them."

"And yet," said Legrand, the solution is by no means so difficult as you might be led to imagine from the first hazy inspection of the characters. These characters, as any one might readily guess, form a cipher; that is to say, they convey a meaning; but then, from what is known of Kidd, I could not suppose him capable of constructing any of the more abstruse cryptographs. I made up my mind, at once, that this was of a simple species—such, however, as would appear, to the crude intellect of the sailor, absolutely insoluble without the key."

"And you really solved it?"

"Readily; I have solved others of an abstruseness ten thousand times greater. Circumstances, and a certain bias of mind, have led me to take interest in such riddles, and it may well be doubted whether human ingenuity can construct an enigma of the kind which human ingenuity may not, by proper application, resolve. In fact, having once established connected and legible characters, I scarcely gave a thought to the mere difficulty of developing their import.

"In the present case—indeed in all cases of secret writing—the first question regards the language of the cipher; for the principles of solution, so far especially as the more simple ciphers are concerned, depend upon, and are varied by the genius of the particular idiom.

In general, there is no alternative but experiment (directed by probabilities) of every tongue known to him who attempts the solution, until the true one be attained. But, with the cipher now before us, all difficulty was removed by the signature. The pun upon the word 'Kidd' is appreciable in no other language than the English. But for this consideration I should have begun my attempts with the Spanish and French, as the tongues in which a secret of this kind would most naturally have been written by a pirate of the Spanish main. As it was, I assumed the cryptograph to be English.

"You observe there are no divisions between the words. Had there been divisions, the task would have been comparatively easy. In such case I should have commenced with a collation and analysis of the shorter words, and had a word of a single letter occurred, as is most likely, a or I, for example,) I should have considered the solution as assured. But, there being no division, my first step was to ascertain the predominant letters, as well as the least frequent. Counting all, I

constructed a table, thus:

"Of the character 8 there are 33.

19	;	,,	26.
99	4	,,	19.
22	‡)	,,	16.
59	*	79	13.
**	5	,,	12.
99	6	"	11.
27	†1	22	8.
99	0	99	6.
29	92	79	5.
99	: 3	29	4.
79	;	77	3.
22	9	,,,	2.
4.9		••	1.

"Now, in English, the letter which most frequently occurs is e. Afterwards, the succession runs thus:

a o i d h n r s t u y c f g l m w b k p q x z. E predominates so remarkably that an individual sentence of any length is rarely seen, in which it is not the prevail-

ing character.

Here, then, we have, in the very beginning, the groundwork for something more than a mere guess. The general use which may be made of the table is obvious; but in this particular cipher we shall only very partially require its aid. As our predominant character is 8, we will commence by assuming it as the e of the natural alphabet. To verify the supposition, let us observe if the 8 be seen often in couples—for e is doubled with great frequency in English—in such words for with great frequency in English—in such words, for example, as 'meet,' 'fleet,' 'speed, 'seen,' 'been,' 'agree,' &c. In the present instance, we see it doubled no less than five times, although the cryptograph is brief.

"Let us assume 8, then, as e. Now, of all words in the language, 'the' is most usual; let us see, therefore, whether there are not repetitions of any three characters, in the same order of collocation, the last of them being 8. If we discover repetitions of such letters, so arranged, they will most probably represent the word 'the.' Upon inspection, we find no less than seven such arrangements, the characters being ;48. We may, therefore, assume that; represents t, 4 represents h, and 8 represents e—the last being now well confirmed.

Thus a great step has been taken.

"But, having established a single word, we are enabled to establish a vastly important point; that is to say, several commencements and terminations of other words. Let us refer, for example, to the last instance but one, in which the combinations; 48 occurs—not far from the end of the cipher. We knew that the; immediately ensuing is the commencement of a word, and of the six characters succeeding this 'the,' we are cognizant of no less than five. Let us set these characters down, thus, by the letters we know them to represent, eaving a space for the unknown-

t eeth.

"Here we are enabled at once to discard the 'th,' as forming no portion of the word commencing with the first t; since, by experiment of the entire alphabet for a letter adapted to the vacancy, we perceive that no word can be formed of which this th can be a part. We are thus narrowed into

t ee,

and, going through the alphabet, if necessary, as before, we arrive at the word 'tree,' as the sole possible reading. We thus gain another letter, r, represented by (, with the words 'the tree,' in juxtaposition.

"Looking beyond these words, for a short distance, we again see the combination ;48, and employ it by way of termination to what immediately precedes. We have

thus this arrangement:

the tree; 4(‡34 the,

or, substituting the natural letters, where known, it reads thus:

the tree thr! 3h the.

"Now, if in place of the unknown characters, we leave blank spaces, or substitute dots, we read thus:

the tree thr. . . h the,

when the word 'through' makes itself evident at once. But this discovery gives us three new letters, o, u and g, represented by !? and 3.

"Looking now, narrowly, through the cipher for combinations of known characters, we find, not very far

from the beginning, this arrangement:

83(88, or egree,

which, plainly, is the conclusion of the word 'degree,' and gives us another letter, d, represented by †.

"Four letters beyond the word 'degree,' we perceive

the combination

;46(;88.

"Translating the known characters, and representing the unknown by a dot, as before, we read thus:

thr.tee,

an arrangement immediately suggestively of the word 'thirteen,' and again furnishing us with two new characters, i and n, represented by 6 and *.

"Referring now to the beginning of the cryptograph,

we find the combination,

53+++.

"Translating, as before, we obtain -

. good,

which assures us that the first letter is A, and that the

first two words are 'A good.'

"It is now time that we arrange our key, as far as discovered, in a tabular form, to avoid confusion. It will stand thus:

5	represen	nts a
† 8	* **	d
8	••	е
3	99	g
4	22	h
6	99	· i
100	,,	n
+	99	0
(;	21	r
•	"	t

"We have, therefore, no less than ten of the most important letters represented, and it will be unnecessary to proceed with the details of the solution. I have said enough to convince you that ciphers of this nature are readily soluble, and to give you some insight into the rationale of their development. But be assured that the specimen before us appertains to the very simplest species of cryptograph. It now only remains to give you the full translation of the characters upon the parchment, as unriddled. Here it is:

"' A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes northeast and by northmain branch seventh limb east side shoot from the left eye of the death's-head a bee line from the tree

through the shot fifty feet out."

"But," said I, "the enigma seems still in as bad a condition as ever. How is it possible to extort a meaning from all this jargon about 'devil's seats,' 'death's heads,' and 'bishop's hotels?"

"I confess," replied Legrand, "that the matter still wears a serious aspect, when regarded with a casual glance. My first endeavour was to divide the sentence into the natural division intended by the cryptographist."

"You mean, to punctuate

it ?"

"Something of that kind."

"But how was it possible to effect this?"

"I reflected that it had been a point with the writer to run his words together without division, so as to increase the difficulty of solution. Now, a not over-acute man, in pursuing such an object, would be nearly certain to overdo the matter. When, in the course of his composition, he arrived at a break in his subject which would naturally require a pause, or a point, he would be exceedingly apt to run his characters, at this place, more than usually close together. If you will observe the MS., in the present instance, you will easily detect five such cases of unusual crowding. Acting upon this hint, I made the division thus:

" "A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat—forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes—northeast and by north—main branch seventh limb east side—shoot from the left eye of the death's-head—a bee-line from the

tree through the shot fifty feet out."

"Even this division," said I, "leaves me still in the dark."

"It left me also in the dark," replied Legrand, "for a few days; during which I made diligent inquiry in the neighbourhood of Sullivan's Island, for any building which went by the name of the 'Bishop's Hotel;' for, of course, I dropped the obsolete word 'hostel.' Gaining no information on the subject, I was on the point of extending my sphere of search, and proceeding in a more systematic manner, when one morning it entered into my head quite suddenly, that this 'Bishop's Hostel' might have some reference to an old family of the name of Bessop, which, time out of mind, had held possession of an ancient manor-house, about four miles to the northward of the island. I accordingly went over to the plantation, and re-instituted my inquiries among the older negroes of the place. At length one of the most aged of the women said that she had heard of such a place as Bessop's Castle, and thought that she could guide me to it, but that it was not a castle, nor a tavern, but a high rock."

"I offered to pay her well for her trouble; and, after some demur, she consented to accompany me to the spot. We found it without much difficulty, when, dismissing her, I proceeded to examine the place. The 'castle' consisted of an irregular assemblage of cliffs and rocks—one of the latter being quite remarkable for its height as well as for its insulated and artificial appearance. I clambered to its apex, and then felt much at a loss as to what should be next done.

"While I was busied in reflection, my eyes fell upon a narrow ledge in the eastern face of the rock, perhaps a yard below the summit upon which I stood. This ledge projected about eighteen inches, and was not more than a foot wide, while a niche in the cliff, just above it, gave it a rude resemblance to one of the hollow-backed chairs used by our ancestors. I made no doubt that here was the 'devil's seat' alluded to in the MS., and now I seemed to grasp the full secret of the riddle.

"The 'good glass,' I knew, could have reference to nothing but a telescope; for the word 'glass' is rarely employed in any other sense by seamen. Now here, I at once saw, was a telescope to be used, and a definite point of view, admitting no variation, from which to use it. Nor did I hesitate to believe that the phrases, 'forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes,' and 'north-east and by north,' were intended as directions for the levelling of the glass. Greatly excited by these discoveries, I hurried home, procured a telescope, and returned to the rock.

"I let myself down to the ledge, and found that it was impossible to retain a seat upon it except in one particular position. This fact confirmed my preconceived idea. I proceeded to use the glass. Of course, the 'forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes' could allude to nothing but elevation above the visible horizon, since the horizontal direction was clearly indicated by the words, 'northeast and by north.' This latter

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direction I at once established by means of a pocketcompass; then, pointing the glass as nearly at an angle
of forty-one degrees of elevation as I could do it by
guess, I moved it cautiously up or down, until my
attention was arrested by a circular rift or opening in
the foliage of a large tree that overtopped its fellows
in the distance. In the centre of this rift I perceived
a white spot, but could not at first distinguish what it
was. Adjusting the focus of the telescope, I again
looked, and now made it out to be a human skull.
"Upon this discovery I was so sanguing as to con-

"Upon this discovery I was so sanguine as to consider the enigma solved; for the phrase 'main branch, seventh limb, east side,' could refer only to the position of the skull upon the tree, while 'shoot from the left eye of the death's-head' admitted also of but one interpretation, in regard to a search for buried treasure. I perceived that the design was to drop a bullet from the left eye of the skull, and that a bee-line.



or, in other words, a straight line, drawn from the nearest point of the trunk through 'the shot,' (or the spot where the bullet fell,) and thence extended to a distance of fifty feet, would indicate a definite point—and beneath this point I thought it at least possible that a deposit of value lay concealed."

"All this," I said, "is exceedingly clear, and, although ingenious, still simple and explicit. When

you left the Bishop's Hotel, what then?"

"Why, having carefully taken the bearings of the tree, I turned homewards. The instant that I left 'the devil's seat,' however, the circular rift vanished; nor could I get a glimpse of it afterwards, turn as I would. What seems to me the chief ingenuity in this whole business, is the fact (for repeated experiment has convinced me it is a fact) that the circular opening in question is visible from no other attainable point of view than that afforded by the narrow ledge upon the face of the rock.

"In this expedition to the 'Bishop's Hotel' I had been attended by Jupiter, who had, no doubt, observed, for some weeks past, the abstraction of my demeanour, and took especial care not to leave me alone. But on the next day, getting up very early, I contrived to give him the slip, and went into the hills in search of the tree. After much toil, I found it. When I came home at night my valet proposed to give me a flogging. With the rest of the adventure I believe you are as well acquainted as myself."

acquainted as myself."

"I suppose," said I, "you missed the spot, in the first attempt at digging, through Jupiter's stupidity in letting the beetle fall through the right instead of

through the left eye of the skull."

"Precisely. This mistake made a difference of about two inches and a half in the 'shot'—that is to say, in the position of the peg nearest the tree; and had the treasure been beneath the 'shot,' the error would have been of little moment; but 'the shot,' together with the nearest point of the tree, were merely two points for the establishment of a line of direction; of course the error, however trivial in the beginning, increased as we proceeded with the line, and by the time we had gone fifty feet, threw us quite off the scent. But for my deep-seated impressions that treasure was here somewhere actually buried, we might have had all our labour in vain."

"But your grandiloquence, and your conduct in swinging the beetle—how excessively odd! I was sure you were mad. And why did you insist upon letting fall the beetle, instead of a bullet, from the skull?"

"Why, to be frank, I felt somewhat annoyed by your evident suspicions touching my sanity, and so resolved to punish you quietly, in my own way, by a little bit of sober mystification. For this reason I swung the beetle, and for this reason I let it fall from the tree. An observation of yours about its great weight suggested the latter idea."

"Yes, I perceive; and now there is only one point which puzzles me. What are we to make of the

skeletons found in the hole?"

"That is a question I am no more able to answer than yourself. There seems, however, only one plausible way of accounting for them—and yet it is dreadful to believe in such atrocity as my suggestion would imply. It is clear that Kidd—if Kidd indeed secreted this treasure, which I doubt not—it is clear that he must have had assistance in the labour. But this labour concluded, he may have thought it expedient to remove all participants in his secret. Perhaps a couple of blows with a mattock were sufficient, while his coadjutors were busy in the pit; perhaps it required a dozen—who shall tell?"

Startling effects of Mesmerism

on a dying man.

to consider it any matter for wonder, that the extraordinary case of M. Valdemar has excited discussion. It would have been a miracle had it not—especially under the circumstances. Through the desire of all parties concerned to keep the affair from the public, at least for the present, or until we had further opportunities for investigation—through our endeavours to effect this—a garbled or exaggerated account made its way into society, and became the source of many unpleasant misrepresentations; and, very naturally, of a great deal of disbelief.

It is now rendered necessary that I give the facts—as far as I comprehend them myself. They are, suc-

cinctly, these:

My attention, for the last three years, had been repeatedly drawn to the subject of mesmerism; and, about nine months ago, it occurred to me, quite suddenly, that in the series of experiments made hitherto, there had been a very remarkable and most unaccountable omission:—no person had as yet been mesmerized in articulo mortis. It remained to be seen, first, whether, in such condition, there existed in the patient any susceptibility to the magnetic influence; secondly, whether, if any existed, it was impaired or increased by the condition; thirdly, to what extent, or for how long a period, the encroachments of death might be arrested by the

process. There were other points to be ascertained, but these most excited my curiosity—the last especially, from the immensely important character of its

consequences.

In looking around me for some subject by whose means I might test these particulars, I was brought to think of my friend, M. Ernest Valdemar, the wellknown compiler of the "Bibliotheca Forensica," and author (under the nom de plume of Issachar Marx) of the Polish versions of "Wallenstein" and "Gargantua." M. Valdemar, who has resided principally at Harlem, N. Y., since the year 1839, is (or was) particularly noticeable for the extreme spareness of his person-his lower limbs much resembling those of John Randolph; and also for the whiteness of his whiskers, in violent contrast to the blackness of his hair—the latter, in consequence, being very generally mistaken for a wig. His temperament was markedly nervous, and rendered him a good subject for mesmeric experiment. On two or three occasions I had put him to sleep with little difficulty, but was disappointed in other results, which his peculiar constitution had naturally led me to anticipate. His will was at no period positively, or thoroughly, under my control, and in regard to clairvoyance, I could accomplish with him nothing to be relied upon. I always attributed my failure at these points to the disordered state of his health. For some months previous to my becoming acquainted with him, his physicians had declared him in a confirmed phthisis. It was his custom, indeed, to speak calmly of his approaching dissolution, as of a matter neither to be avoided nor regretted.

When the ideas to which I have alluded first occurred to me, it was of course very natural that I should think of M. Valdemar. I knew the steady philosophy of the man too well to apprehend any scruples from him; and he had no relatives in America who would be likely to interfere. I spoke to him frankly

upon the subject; and, to my surprise, his interest seemed vividly excited. I say to my surprise; for, although he had always yielded his person freely to my experiments, he had never before given me any tokens of sympathy with what I did. His disease was of that character which would admit of exact calculation in respect to the epoch of its termination in death; and it was finally arranged between us that he would send for me about twenty-four hours before the period announced by his physicians as that of his decease.

It is now rather more than seven months since I received, from M. Valdemar himself, the subjoined note:

"MY DEAR P-,

"You may as well come now. D— and F—are agreed that I cannot hold out beyond to-morrow midnight; and I think they have hit the time very nearly. "VALDEMAR."

I received this note within half an hour after it was written, and in fifteen minutes more I was in the dying man's chamber. I had not seen him for ten days, and was appalled by the fearful alteration which the brief interval had wrought in him. His face wore a leaden hue; the eyes were utterly lustreless; and the emaciation was so extreme, that the skin had been broken through by the cheek-bones. His expectoration was excessive. The pulse was barely perceptible. He retained, nevertheless, in a very remarkable manner, both his mental power and a certain degree of physical strength. He spoke with distinctness—took some palliative medicines without aid—and, when I entered the room, was occupied in pencilling memoranda in a pocket-book. He was propped up in the bed by pillows. Doctors D—— and F—— were in attendance.

After pressing Valdemar's hand, I took these gentlemen aside, and obtained from them a minute account of the patient's condition. The left lung had been for eighteen months in a semi-osseous or cartilaginous

state, and was, of course, entirely useless for all purposes of vitality. The right, in its upper portion, was also partially, if not thoroughly, ossified, while the lower region was merely a mass of purulent tubercles, running one into another. Several extensive perforations existed; and, at one point, permanent adhesion to the ribs had taken place. These appearances in the right lobe were of comparatively recent date. The ossification had proceeded with very unusual rapidity—no sign of it had been discovered a month before, and the adhesion had only been observed during the three previous days. Independently of the phthisis, the patient was suspected of aneurism of the aorta; but on this point the osseous symptoms rendered an exact diagnosis impossible. It was the opinion of both physicians that M. Valdemar would die about midnight on the morrow (Sunday). It was then seven o'clock on Saturday evening.

On quitting the invalid's bed-side to hold conversation with myself, Doctors D— and F— had bidden him a final farewell. It had not been their intention to return; but, at my request, they agreed to look in upon the patient about ten the next night.

 the urgent entreaties of M. Valdemar, and secondly, by my conviction that I had not a moment to lose, as he

was evidently sinking fast.

Mr. L——I was so kind as to accede to my desire that he would take notes of all that occurred; and it is from his memoranda that what I now have to relate is, for the most part, either condensed or copied verbatim.

It wanted about five minutes to eight when, taking the patient's hand, I begged him to state, as distinctly as he could, to Mr. L——l, whether he (M. Valdemar) was entirely willing that I should make the experiment of mesmerizing him in his then condition.

He replied feebly, yet quite audibly, "Yes, I wish to be mesmerized"—adding immediately afterwards, "I

fear you have deferred it too long."

While he spoke thus, I commenced the passes which I had already found most effectual in subduing him. He was evidently influenced with the first lateral stroke of my hand across his forehead; but although I exerted all my powers, no farther perceptible effect was induced until some minutes after ten o'clock, when Doctors D— and F— called, according to appointment. I explained to them, in a few words, what I designed, and as they opposed no objection, saying that the patient was already in the death agony, I proceeded without hesitation—exchanging, however, the lateral passes for downward ones, and directing my gaze entirely into the right eye of the sufferer.

By this time his pulse was imperceptible and his breathing was stertorious, and at intervals of half a

minute.

This condition was nearly unaltered for a quarter of of an hour. At the expiration of this period, however, a natural, although a very deep sigh, escaped the bosom of the dying man, and the stertorious breathing ceased—that is to say, its stertoriousness was no longer apparent—the intervals were undiminished. The patient's extremities were of an icy coldness.

At five minutes before eleven, I perceived unequivocal signs of the mesmeric influence. The glassy roll of the eye was changed for that expression of uneasy inward examination which is never seen except in cases of sleep-waking, and which it is quite impossible to mistake. With a few rapid lateral passes I made the lids quiver, as in incipient sleep, and with a few more I closed them altogether. I was not satisfied, however, with this, but continued the manipulations vigorously, and with the fullest exertion of the will, until I had completely stiffened the limbs of the slumberer, after placing them in a seemingly easy position. The legs were at full length; the arms were nearly so, and reposed on the bed at a moderate distance from the loins. The head was very slightly elevated.

When I had accomplished this, it was fully midnight, and I requested the gentlemen present to examine M. Valdemar's condition. After a few experiments, they admitted him to be in an unusually perfect state of mesmeric trance. The curiosity of both the physicians was greatly excited. Dr. D—— resolved at once to remain with the patient all night, while Dr. F—— took leave with a promise to return at daybreak.

Mr. L-l and the nurses remained.

We left M. Valdemar entirely undisturbed until about three o'clock in the morning, when I approached him and found him in precisely the same condition as when Dr. F—— went away—that is to say, he lay in the same position; the pulse was imperceptible; the breathing was gentle (scarcely noticeable, unless through the application of a mirror to the lips); the eyes were closed naturally; and the limbs were as rigid and as cold as marble. Still, the general appearance was certainly not that of death.

As I approached M. Valdemar, I made a kind of half effort to influence his right arm into pursuit of my own, as I passed the latter gently to and fro above his person. In such experiments with this patient, I had

never perfectly succeeded before, and assuredly I had little thought of succeeding now; but to my astonishment, his arm very readily, although feebly, followed every direction I assigned it with mine. I determined to hazard a few words of conversation.

"M. Valdemar," I said, "are you asleep?" He made no answer, but I perceived a tremour about the lips, and was thus induced to repeat the question again and again. At its third repetition, his whole frame was agitated by a very slight shivering; the eye-lids unclosed themselves so far as to display a white line of a ball; the lips moved sluggishly, and from between them, in a barely audible whisper, issued the words:

"Yes;—asleep now. Do not wake me!—let me

die so!"

I here felt the limbs and found them as rigid as ever. The right arm, as before, obeyed the direction of my hand. I questioned the sleep-waker again:

"Do you still feel pain in the breast, M. Valdemar?"

The answer now was immediate, but even less audible than before:

" No pain-I am dying."

I did not think it advisable to disturb him farther just then, and nothing more was said or done until the arrival of Dr. F——, who came a little before sunrise, and expressed unbounded astonishment at finding the patient still alive. After feeling the pulse and applying a mirror to the lips, he requested me to speak to the sleep-waker again. I did so, saying:

"M. Valdemar, do you still sleep?"

As before, some minutes elapsed ere a reply was made; and during the interval the dying man seemed to be collecting his energies to speak. At my fourth repetition of the question, he said, very faintly, almost inaudibly:

"Yes; still asiecp-dying."

It was now the opinion, or rather the wish, of the physicians, that M. Valdemar should be suffered to

remain undisturbed in his present apparently tranquil condition, until death should supervene—and this, it was generally agreed, must now take place within a few minutes. I concluded, however, to speak to him once more, and merely repeated my previous question.

While I spoke, there came a marked change over the countenance of the sleep-waker. The eyes rolled themselves slowly open, the pupils disappearing upwardly; the skin generally assumed a cadaverous hue, resembling not so much parchment as white paper; and the circular hectic spots, which hitherto had been strongly defined in the centre of each cheek, went out at once. I use this expression, because the suddenness of their departure put me in mind of nothing so much as the extinguishment of a candle by a puff of the breath. The upper lip, at the same time, writhed itself away from the teeth, which it had previously covered completely; while the lower jaw fell with an audible jerk, leaving the mouth widely extended, and disclosing in full view the swollen and blackened tongue. I presume that no member of the party then present had been unaccustomed to death-bed horrors; but so hideous beyond conception was the appearance of M. Valdemar at this moment, that there was a general shrinking back from the region of the bed.

I now feel that I have reached a point of this narrative at which every reader will be startled into positive disbelief. It is my business, however, simply to proceed.

There was no longer the faintest sign of vitality in M. Valdemar; and, concluding him to be dead, we were consigning him to the charge of the nurses, when a strong vibratory motion was observable in the tongue. This continued for perhaps a minute. At the expiration of this period, there issued from the distended and motionless jaws a voice—such as it would be madness in me to attempt describing. There are, indeed, two or three epithets which might be considered as applicable to it in part; I might say, for example, that

the sound was harsh, and broken, and hollow; but the hideous whole is indescribable, for the simple reason that no similar sounds have ever jarred upon the ear of humanity. There were two particulars, nevertheless, which I thought then, and still think, might fairly be stated as characteristic of the intonation—as well adapted to convey some idea of its unearthly peculiarity. In the first place, the voice seemed to reach our ears—at least mine—from a vast distance, or from some deep cavern within the earth. In the second place it impressed me (I fear, indeed, that it will be impossible to make myself comprehended) as gelatinous or glutinous matters impress the sense of touch.

I have spoken both of "sound" and of "voice." I mean to say that the sound was one of distinct—of even wonderfully, thrillingly distinct—syllibification. M. Valdemar spoke—obviously in reply to the question I had propounded to him a few minutes before. I had asked him, it will be remembered, if he still slept.

He now said:

"Yes;—no;—I have been sleeping—and now—now I am dead."

No person present even effected to deny, or attempted to repress, the unutterable, shuddering horror which these few words, thus uttered, were so well calculated to convey. Mr. L——l (the student), swooned. The nurses immediately left the chamber, and could not be induced to return. My own impressions I would not pretend to render intelligible to the reader. For nearly an hour, we busied ourselves, silently—without the utterance of a word—in endeavours to revive Mr. L——l. When he came to himself, we addressed ourselves again to an investigation of M. Valdemar's condition.

It remained in all respects as I have last described it, with the exception that the mirror no longer afforded evidence of respiration. An attempt to draw blood from the arm failed. I should mention, too, that this limb was no farther subject to my will. I endeavoured

in vain to make it follow the direction of my hand. The only real indication, indeed, of the mesmeric influence, was now found in the vibratory movement of the tongue, whenever I addressed M. Valdemar a question. He seemed to be making an effort to reply, but had no longer sufficient volition. To queries put to him by any other person than myself he seemed utterly insensible—although I endeavoured to place each member of the company in mesmeric rapport with him. I believe that I have now related all that is necessary to an understanding of the sleep-waker's state at this epoch. Other nurses were procured; and at ten o'clock I left the house, in company with the two physicians and Mr. L-l.

In the afternoon we all called again to see the patient, His condition remained precisely the same. We had now some discussion as to the propriety and feasibility of awakening him; but we had little difficulty in agreeing that no good purpose would be served by so doing. It was evident that, so far, death (or what is usually termed death) had been arrested by the mesmeric process. It seemed clear to us all that to awaken M. Valdemar would be merely to insure his

instant, or at least his speedy dissolution.

From this period until the close of last week-an interval of nearly seven months—we continued to make daily calls at M. Valdemar's house, accompanied, now and then, by medical and other friends. All this time the sleep-waker remained exactly as I have last described him. The nurses' attentions were continual.

It was on Friday last that we finally resolved to make the experiment of awakening, or attempting to awaken, him; and it is the (perhaps) unfortunate result of this latter experiment which has given rise to so much discussion in private circles—to so much of what I cannot help thinking unwarranted popular feeling.

For the purpose of relieving M. Valdemar from the

mesmeric trance, I made use of the customary passes.

These, for a time, were unsuccessful. The first indication of revival was afforded by a partial descent of the iris. It was observed, as especially remarkable, that this lowering of the pupil was accompanied by the profuse out-flowing of a yellowish ichor (from beneath the lids) of a pungent and highly offensive odour.

It was now suggested that I should attempt to influence the patient's arm, as heretofore. I made the attempt, and failed. Dr. F—— then intimated a desire

to have me put a question. I did so, as follows:

"M. Valdemar, can you explain to us what are

your feelings or wishes now?"

There was an instant return of the hectic circles on the cheeks; the tongue quivered, or rather rolled violently in the mouth (although the jaws and lips remained rigid as before); and at length the same hideous voice which I have already described, broke forth:

"For God's sake!—quick!—quick!—put me to sleep—or, quick!—waken me!—quick!—I say to you that

I am dead!"

I was thoroughly unnerved, and for an instant remained undecided what to do. At first I made an endeavour to re-compose the patient; but, failing in this through total abeyance of the will, I retraced my steps and as earnestly struggled to awaken him. In this attempt I soon saw that I should be successful—or at least I soon fancied that my success would be complete—and I am sure that all in the room were prepared to see the patient awaken.

For what really occurred, however, it is quite impossible that any human being could have been prepared.

As I rapidly made the mesmeric passes, amid ejaculatious of "dead! dead!" absolutely bursting from the tongue and not from the lips of the sufferer, his whole frame at once—within the space of a single minute, or even less, shrunk—crumbled—absolutely rotted away beneath my hands. Upon the bed, before the whole company, there lay a mass of loathsome putrescence!

A Descent into the Maelstrom.

"The ways of God in Nature, as in Providence, are not as our ways; nor are the models that we frame any way commensurate to the vastness, profundity, and unsearchableness of His works, which have a depth in them greater than the well of Democritus."—JOSEPH GLANVILLE.

E had now reached the summit of the loftiest crag. For some minutes the old man seemed too much exhausted to speak.

"Not long ago," said he, at length, "and I could have guided you on this route as well as the youngest of my sons; but, about three years past, there

happened to me an event such as never happened before to mortal man—or at least such as no man ever survived to tell of—and the six hours of deadly terror which I then endured have broken me up body and soul. You suppose me a very old man—but I am not. It took less than a single day to change these hairs from a jetty black to white, to weaken my limbs, and to unstring my nerves, so that I tremble at the least exertion, and am frightened at a shadow. Do you know I can scarcely look over this little cliff without getting giddy?"

The "little cliff," upon whose edge he had so carelessly thrown himself down to rest that the weightier portion of his body hung over it, while he was only kept from falling by the tenure of his elbow on its extreme and slippery edge—this "little cliff" arose, a sheer unobstructed precipice of black shining rock some fifteen or sixteen hundred feet from the world of crags beneath us. Nothing would have tempted me to within half a dozen vards of its brink. In truth, so deeply was I excited by the perilous position of my companion, that I fell at full length upon the ground, clung to the shrubs around me, and dared not even glance upward at the sky; while I struggled in vain to divest myself of the idea that the very foundations of the mountain were in danger from the fury of the winds. It was long before I could reason myself into sufficient courage to sit up and look out into the distance.

"You must get over these fancies," said the guide, "for I have brought you here that you might have the best possible view of the scene of that event I mentioned—and to tell you the whole story with the spot just under your eye.

"We are now," he continued, in that particularizing manner which distinguished him—" we are now close upon the Norwegian coast—in the sixty-eighth degree of latitude—in the great province of Nordland—and in the dreary district of Lofoden. The mountain upon whose top we sit is Helseggen the Cloudy. Now raise yourself up a little higher—hold on to the grass if you feel giddy—so—and look out, beyond the belt of vapour beneath us, into the sea."

I looked dizzily, and beheld a wide expanse of ocean, whose waters were so inky a hue as to bring at once to my mind the Nubian geographer's account of the Mare Tenebrarum—a panorama more deplorably desolate, no human imagination can conceive. To the right and left, as far as the eye could reach, there lay outstretched, like ramparts of the world, lines of horridly black and beetling cliff, whose character of gloom was but the more forcibly illustrated by the serf which reared high up against it its white and ghastly crest, hewling and shricking for ever. Just opposite the promontory upon whose apex we were placed, and at a

distance of some five or six miles out at sea, there was visible a small, bleak-looking island; or, more properly, its position was discernible through the wilderness of surge in which it was enveloped. About two miles nearer the land, arose another of smaller size, hideously craggy and barren, and encompassed at various intervals by a cluster of dark rocks.

The appearance of the ocean, in the space between the more distant island and the shore, had something very unusual about it. Although, at the time, so strong a gale was blowing landward that a brig in the remote offing lay-to under a double-reefed trysail, and constantly plunged her whole hull out of sight, still there was here nothing like a regular swell, but only a short, quick, angry, cross dashing of water in every direction—as well in the teeth of the wind as otherwise. Of foam there was little except in the immediate vicinity of the rocks.

"The island in the distance," resumed the old man, is called, by the Norwegians, Vurrgh. The one midway is Moskoe. That a mile to the northward is Ambaaren. Yonder are Islesen, Hotholm, Keildhelm, Suarven, and Buckholm, Farther off—between Moskoe and Vurrgh—are Otterholm, Flimen, Sandflesen, and Stockholm. These are the true names of the places; but why it has been thought necessary to name them at all, is more than either you or I can understand. Do you hear any thing? Do you see any change in the water?"

We had now been about ten minutes upon the top of Helseggen, to which we had ascended from the interior of Lofoden, so that we had caught no glimpse of the sea until it had burst upon us from the summit. As the old man spoke, I became aware of a loud and gradually increasing sound, like the moaning of a vast herd of buffaloes upon an American prairie; and at the same moment I perceived that what seamen term the chopping character of the ocean beneath us, was rapidly changing into a current, which set to the eastward.

Even while I gazed, this current acquired a monstrous velocity. Each moment added to its speed—to its headlong impetuosity. In five minutes the whole sea, as far as Vurrgh, was lashed into ungovernable fury; but it was between Moskoe and the coast that the main uproar held its sway. Here the vast bed of the waters seamed and scarr ed into a thousand conflicting channels burst suddenly into phrensied convulsion—heaving,' boiling, hissing—gyrating in gigantic and innumerable vortices, and all whirling and plunging on to the eastward with a rapidity which water never elsewhere assumes, except in precipitous descents.

In a few minutes more, there came over the scene another radical alteration. The general surface grew somewhat more smooth, and the whirlpools, one by one, disappeared, while prodigious streaks of foam became apparent where none had been seen before. These streaks, at length spreading out to a great distance, and entering into combination, took unto themselves the gyratory motion of the subsided vortices, and seemed to form the germ of another more vast. Suddenlyvery suddenly—this assumed a distinct and definite existence, in a circle of more than a mile in diameter. The edge of the whirl was represented by a broad belt of gleaming spray; but no particle of this slipped into the mouth of the terrific funnel, whose interior, as far as the eye could fathom it, was a smooth, shining, and jet-black wall of water, inclined to the horizon at an angle of some forty-five degrees, speeding dizzily round and round with a swaying and sweltering motion, and sending forth to the winds an appalling voice-half shriek, half roar-such as not even the mighty cataract of Niagara ever lifts up in its agony to heaven.

The mountain trembled to its very base, and the rock rocked. I threw myself upon my face, and clung to the scant herbage in an excess of nervous agitation.

"This," said I, at length, to the old man-"this can

be nothing else than the great whirlpool of the Mael-strom."

"So it is sometimes termed," said he; "we Norwegians call it the Moskoe-strom, from the island of Mos-

koe in the midway."

The ordinary accounts of this vortex had by no means prepared me for what I saw. That of Jonas Ramus, which is perhaps the most circumstantial of any, cannot impart the faintest conception either of the magnificence, or of the horror of the scene—or of the wild bewildering sense of the novel which confounds the beholder. I am not sure from what point of view the writer in question surveyed it, nor at what time; but it could neither have been from the summit of Helseggen nor during a storm. There are some passages of his description, nevertheless, which may be quoted for their details, although their effect is exceedingly feeble in conveying an impression of the spectacle.

"Between Lofoden and Moskoe," he says, "the depth of the water is between thirty-six and forty fathoms; but on the other side, toward Ver (Vurrgh), this depth decreases so as not to afford a convenient passage for a vessel without the risk of splitting on the rocks, which happens even in the calmest weather. When it is flood, the stream runs up the country between Lofoden and Moskoe with a boisterous rapidity; but the roar of its impetuous ebb to the sea is scarce equalled by the loudest and most dreadful cataracts, the noise being heard several leagues off; and the vortices or pits are of such an extent and depth, that if a ship comes within its attraction, it is inevitably absorbed and carried down to the bottom, and there beat to pieces against the rocks; and when the water relaxes, the fragments thereof are thrown up again. But these intervals of tranquillity are only at the turn of the ebb and flood, and in calm weather, and last but a quarter of an hour, its violence gradually returning. When the stream is most boisterous, and its fury heightened by a storm, it is dangerous to come within a Norway mile of it. Boats, yachts, and ships have been carried away by not guarding against it before they were within its reach. It likewise happens frequently, that whales come too near the stream, and are overpowered by its violence; and then it is impossible to describe their howlings and bellowings in their fruitless struggles to disengage themselves. A bear once, attempting to swim from Lofoden to Moskoe, was caught by the stream and borne down, while he roared terribly, so as to be heard on shore. Large stocks of firs and pine trees, after being absorbed by the current, rise again, broken and torn to such a degree as if bristles grew upon them. This plainly shows the bottom to consist of craggy rocks, among which they are whirled to and fro. This stream is regulated by the flux and reflux of the sea—it being constantly high and low-water every six hours. In the year 1645, early in the morning of Sexagesima Sunday, it raged with such noise and impetuosity that the very stones of the houses on the coast fell to the ground."

In regard to the depth of the water, I could not see how this could have been ascertained at all in the immediate vicinity of the vortex. The "forty fathoms" must have reference only to portions of the channel close upon the shore either of Moskoe or Lofoden. The depth in the centre of the Moskoe-strom must be immeasurably greater; and no better proof of this fact is necessary that can be obtained from even the sidelong glance into the abyss of the whirl which may be had from the highest crag of Helseggen. Looking down from this pinnacle upon the howling Phlegethon below, I could not help smiling at the simplicity with which the honest Jonas Ramus records, as a matter difficult of belief, the anecdotes of the whales and the bears; for it appeared to me, in fact, a self-evident thing, that the largest ship of the line in existence, coming within the influence of that deadly attraction, could resist it as

little as a feather the hurricane, and must disappear

hodily and at once.

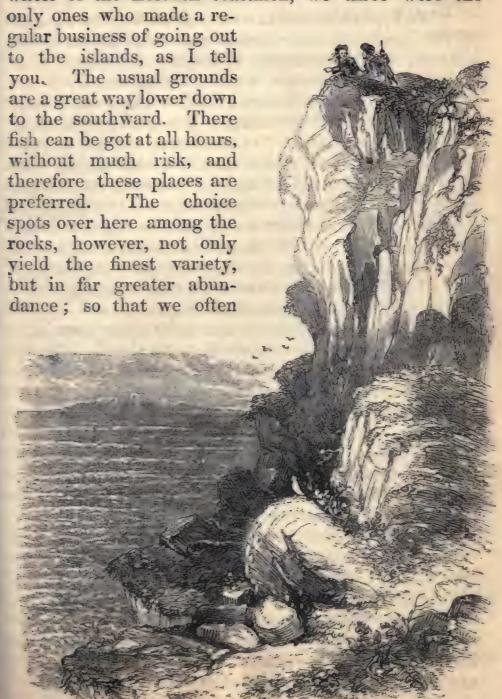
The attempts to account for the phenomenon-some of which I remember, seemed to me sufficiently plausible in perusal-now wore a very different and unsatisfactory aspect. The idea generally received is, that this, as well as three smaller vortices among the Ferroe islands, "have no other cause than the collision of waves rising and falling, at flux and reflux, against a ridge of rocks and shelves, which confines the water so that it precipitates itself like a cataract; and thus the higher the flood rises, the deeper must the fall be, and the natural result of all is a whirlpool or vortex, the prodigious suction of which is sufficiently known by lesser experiments."—These are the words of the "Encyclopædia Britannica." Kircher and others imagine that in the centre of the channel of the Maelstrom is an abyss penetrating the globe, and issuing in some very remote part—the Gulf of Bothnia being somewhat decidedly named in one instance. This opinion, idle in itself, was the one to which, as I gazed, my imagination most readily assented; and mentioning it to the guide, I was rather surprised to hear him say, that although it was the view almost universally entertained of the subject by the Norwegians, it nevertheless was not his own. As to the former notion, he confessed his inability to comprehend it; and here I agreed with him-for, however conclusive on paper, it becomes altogether unintelligible, and even absurd, amid the thunder of the abyss.

"You have had a good look at the whirl now," said the old man; "and if you will creep round this crag, so as to get in its lee, and deaden the roar of the water, I will tell you a story that will convince you I ought

to know something of the Moskoe-strom.

I placed myself as desired, and he proceeded:-

"Myself and my two brothers once owned a schoonerrigged smack of about seventy tons burthen, with which we were in the habit of fishing among the islands beyond Moskoe, nearly to Vurrgh. In all violent eddies at sea there is good fishing, at proper opportunities, if one has only the courage to attempt it; but among the whole of the Lofoden coastmen, we three were the



got in a single day, what the more timid of the craft could not scrape together in a week. In fact, we made it a matter of desperate speculation—the risk of life standing instead of labour, and courage answering for

capital.

"We kept the smack in a cove about five miles higher up the coast than this; and it was our practice, in fine weather, to take advantage of the fifteen minutes' slack to push across the main channel of the Moskoe-strom, far above the pool, and then drop down upon anchorage somewhere near Otterholm, or Sandflesen, where the eddies are not so violent as elsewhere. Here we used to remain until nearly time for slack water again, when we weighed and made for home. We never set out upon this expedition without a steady side-wind for going and coming—one that we felt sure would not fail us before our return; and we seldom made a miscalculation upon this point. Twice, during six years, we were forced to stay all night at anchor on account of a dead calm, which is a rare thing indeed just about here; and once we had to remain on the grounds nearly a week, starving to death, owing to a gale which blew up shortly after our arrival, and made the channel too boisterous to be thought of. Upon this occasion we should have been driven out to sea in spite of everything (for the whirlpools threw us round and round so violently that, at length, we fouled our anchor and dragged it), if it had not been that we drifted into one of the innumerable cross currents—here to-day and gone to-morrow—which drove us under the lee of Flimen, where, by good luck, we brought up.

"I could not tell you the twentieth part of the difficulties we encountered on the grounds." It is a bad spot to be in, even in good weather; but we made shift always to run the gauntlet of the Moskoe-strom itself without accident; although at times my heart has been in my mouth when we happened to be a minute or so behind or before the slack. The wind sometimes was not as strong as we thought it at starting; and then we made rather less way than we could wish; while the current rendered the smack unmanageable. My eldest brother had a son eighteen years old, and I had two stout boys of my own. These would have been of great assistance at such times, in using the sweeps, as well as afterward in fishing; but, somehow, although we ran the risk ourselves, we had not the heart to let the young ones get into the danger—for, after all is said and done, it was a horrible danger, and that is the truth.

"It is now within a few days of three years since what I am going to tell you occurred. It was on the tenth day of July, 18—, a day which the people of this part of the world will never forget; for it was one in which blew the most terrible hurricane that ever came out of the heavens. And yet all the morning, and indeed until late in the afternoon, there was a gentle and steady breeze from the south-west, while the sun shone brightly, so that the oldest seaman among us could not have foreseen what was to follow.

"The three of us—my two brothers and myself—had crossed over to the islands about two o'clock, P.M., and had soon nearly loaded the smack with fine fish, which, we all remarked, were more plenty that day than we had ever known them. It was just seven, by my watch, when we weighed and started for home, so as to make the worst of the Strom at slack water, which we knew would be at eight.

"We set out with a fresh wind on our starboard quarter, and for some time spanked along at a great rate, never dreaming of danger, for indeed we saw not the slighest reason to apprehend it. All at once we were taken aback by a breeze from over Helseggen. This was most unusual—something that had never happened to us before; and I began to feel a little uneasy without exactly knowing why. We put the boat on the wind, but could make no headway at all for the eddies; and I was upon the point of proposing to return to the anchorage, when, looking astern, we saw the whole horizon

covered with a singular copper-coloured cloud that rose

with the most amazing velocity.

"In the meantime, the breeze that had headed us off fell away, and we were dead becalmed, drifting about in every direction. This state of things, however, did not last long enough to give us time to think about it. In less than a minute the storm was upon us—in less than



two the sky was entirely overcast; and what with this and the driving spray, it became suddenly so dark that we could not see each other in the smack.

"Such a hurricane as then blew it is folly to attempt describing. The oldest seaman in Norway never experienced anything like it. We had let our sails go by the run before it cleverly took us; but, at the first puff, both our masts went by the board as if they had been sawed off—the mainmast taking with it my youngest brother, who had lashed himself to it for safety.

"Our boat was the lightest feather of a thing that ever sat upon water. It had a complete flush deck, with only a small hatch near the bow; and this hatch it had always been our custom to batten down when about to cross the Strom, by way of precaution against the chopping seas. But for this circumstance we should have foundered at once; for we lay entirely buried for some moments. How my elder brother escaped destruction I cannot say, for I never had an opportunity of ascertaining. For my part, as soon as I had let the foresail run, I threw myself flat on deck, with my feet against the narrow gunwale of the bow, and with my hands grasping a ringbolt near the foot of the foremast. It was mere instinct that prompted me to do this-which was undoubtedly the very best thing I could have done-for I was too much flurried to think.

"For some moments we were completely deluged, as I say, and all this time I held my breath, and clung to the bolt. When I could stand it no longer, I raised myself upon my knees, still keeping hold with my hands, and thus got my head clear. Presently our little boat gave herself a shake, just as a dog does in coming out of the water, and thus rid herself, in some measure, of the seas. I was now trying to get the better of the stupor that had come over me, and to collect my senses so as to see what was to be done, when I felt somebody grasp my arm. It was my elder brother, and my heart leaped for joy, for I had made sure that he was overboard; but the next moment all this joy was turned into horror—for he put his mouth close to my ear, and screamed out the word "Moskoe-strom!"

"No one ever will know what my feelings were at that moment. I shook from head to foot as if I had had the most violent fit of the ague. I knew what he meant by that one word well enough—I knew what he wished to make me understand. With the wind that now drove us on, we were bound for the whirl of the Strom, and nothing could save us.

"You perceive that in crossing the Strom channel, we always went a long way up above the whirl, even in the calmest weather, and then had to wait and watch carefully for the slack; but now we were driving right upon the pool itself, and in such a hurricane as this: 'To be sure,' I thought, 'we shall get there just about the slack—there is some little hope in that;' but in the next moment I cursed myself for being so great a fool as to dream of hope at all. I knew very well that we were doomed, had we been ten times a ninety-gun ship.

"By this time the first fury of the tempest had spent itself, or perhaps we did not feel it so much, as we scudded before it; but at all events the seas, which at first had been kept down by the wind, and lay flat and frothing, now got up into absolute mountains. A singular change, too, had come over the heavens. Around in every direction it was still as black as pitch; but nearly overhead there burst out all at once, a circular rift of clear sky—as clear as I ever saw, and of a deep bright blue—and through it there blazed forth the full moon with a lustre that I never before knew her to wear. She lit up everything about us with the greatest distinctness, but, O God! what a scene it was to light up!

"I now made one or two attempts to speak to my brother; but in some manner which I could not understand, the din had so increased that I could not make him hear a single word, although I screamed at the top of my voice in his ear. Presently he shook his head, looking as pale as death, and held up one of his fingers,

as if to say, 'Listen!'

"At first I could not make out what he meant, but soon a hideous thought flashed upon me. I dragged my watch from its fob. It was not going. I glanced at its face by the moonlight, and then burst into tears as I flung it far away into the ocean. It had run down a seven o'clock! We were behind the time of the slack and the whirl of the Strom was in full fury.

"When a boat is well built, properly trimmed, and

not deep laden, the waves in a strong gale, when she is going large, seem always to slip from beneath herwhich appears very strange to a landsman; and this is what is called riding, in sea phrase. Well, so far we had ridden the swells very cleverly; but presently a gigantic sea happened to take us right under the counter, and bore us with it as it rose—up—up—as if into the sky. I would not have believed that any wave could rise so high. And then down we came with a sweep, a slide, and a plunge, that made me feel sick and dizzy, as if I was falling from some lofty mountain-top in a dream. But while we were up I had thrown a quick glance around—and that one glance was all-sufficient. I saw our exact position in an instant. The Moskoe-strom whirlpool was about a quarter of a mile dead ahead—but no more like the everyday Moskoe-strom than the whirl as you now see it is like a mill-race. If I had not known where we were, and what we had to expect, I should not have recognised the place at all. As it was, I involuntarily closed my eyes in horrror. The lids elenched themselves together as if in a spasm.

"It could not have been more than two minutes afterward when we suddenly felt the waves subside, and were enveloped in foam. The boat made a sharp half-turn to larboard, and then shot off in its new direction like a thunderbolt. At the same moment the roaring noise of the water was completely drowned in a kind of shrill shriek—such a sound as you might imagine given out by the waste-pipes of many thousand steamvessels letting off their steam all together. We were now in the belt of surf that always surrounds the whirl; and I thought, of course, that another moment would plunge us in the abyss-down which we could only see indistinctly on account of the amazing velocity with which we were borne along. The boat did not seem to sink into the water at all, but to skim like an air-bubble upon the surface of the surge. Her starboard side was next the whirl, and on the larboard arose the world of ocean we had left. It stood like a huge writhing wall between us and the horizon.

"It may appear strange, but now, when we were in the very jaws of the gulf, I felt more composed than when we were only approaching it. Having made up my mind to hope no more, I got rid of a great deal of that terror which unmanned me at first. I suppose it was despair

that strung my nerves.

"It may look like boasting—but what I tell you is truth: I began to reflect how magnificent a thing it was to die in such a manner, and how foolish it was in me to think of so paltry a consideration as my own individual life, in view of so wonderful a manifestation of God's power. I do believe that I blushed with shame when this idea crossed my mind. After a little while I became possessed with the keenest curiosity about the whirl itself. I positively felt a wish to explore its depths, even at the sacrifice I was going to make; and my principal grief was that I should never be able to tell my old companions on shore about the mysteries I should see. These, no doubt, were singular fancies to occupy a man's mind in such extremity; and I have often thought since that the revolutions of the boat around the pool might have rendered me a little light-headed.

"There was another circumstance which tended to restore my self-possession; and this was the cessation of the wind, which could not reach us in our present situation; for, as you saw yourself, the belt of surf is considerably lower than the general bed of the ocean; and this latter now towered above us a high, black, mountainous ridge. If you have never been at sea in a heavy gale, you can form no idea of the confusion of mind occasioned by the wind and spray together. They blind, deafen, and strangle you, and take away all power of action or reflection. But we were now, in a great measure, rid of these annoyances—just as death-condemned felons in prison are allowed petty indulgences, forbidden them

while their doom is yet uncertain.

"How often we made the circuit of the belt it is impossible to say. We careered round and round for perhaps an hour, flying rather than floating, getting gradually more and more into the middle of the surge, and then nearer and nearer to its horrible inner edge. All this time I had never let go of the ring-bolt. My brother was at the stern, holding on to a small empty water-cask which had been securely lashed under the coop of the counter, and was the only thing on deck that had not been swept overboard when the gale first took us. As we approached the brink of the pit, he let go his hold upon this, and made for the ring, from which, in the agony of his terror, he endeavoured to force my hands, as it was not large enough to afford us both a secure grasp. I never felt deeper grief than when I saw him attempt this act, although I knew he was a madman when he did it-a raving maniac through sheer fright. I did not care, however, to contest the point with him. I knew it could make no difference whether either of us held on at all: so I let him have the bolt, and went astern to the cask. This there was no great difficulty in doing, for the smack flew round steadily enough, and upon an even keel, only swaving to and fro with the immense sweeps and swelters of the whirl. Scarcely had I secured myself in my new position, when we gave a wild lurch to starboard, and rushed headlong into the abyss. I muttered a hurried prayer to God, and thought all was over.

"As I felt the sickening sweep of the descent, I had instinctively tightened my hold upon the barrel, and closed my eyes. For some seconds I dared not open them, while I expected instant destruction, and wondered that I was not already in my death-struggles with the water. But moment after moment elapsed. I still lived. The sense of falling had ceased; and the motion of the vessel seemed much as it had been before, while in the belt of foam; with the exception that she now lay more along. I took courage, and looked ence again

upon the scene.

"Never shall I forget the sensations of awe, horror and admiration with which I gazed about me. The boat appeared to be hanging, as if by magic, midway down. upon the interior surface of a funnel vast in circumference, prodigious in depth, and whose perfectly smooth sides might have been mistaken for ebony, but for the bewildering rapidity with which they spun round, and for the gleaming and ghastly radiance they shot forth, as the rays of the full moon, from that circular rift amid the clouds which I have already described, streamed in a flood of golden glory along the black walls, and far away

down into the inmost recesses of the abyss.

"At first I was too much confused to observe anything accurately. The general burst of terrific grandeur was all that I beheld. When I recovered myself a little, however, my gaze fell instinctively downward. In this direction I was able to obtain an unobstructed view, from the manner in which the smack hung on the inclined surface of the pool. She was quite upon an even keel—that is to say, her deck lay in a plane parallel with that of the water; but this latter sloped at an angle of more than forty-five degrees, so that we seemed to be lying upon our beam ends. I could not help observing, nevertheless, that I had scarcely more difficulty in maintaining my hold and footing in this situation than if we had been upon a dead level; and this, I suppose, was owing to the speed at which we revolved.

"The rays of the moon seemed to search the very bottom of the profound gulf; but still I could make out nothing distinctly, on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped, and over which there hung a magnificent rainbow, like that narrow and tottering bridge which Musselmen say is the only pathway between time and eternity. This mist, or spray, was no doubt occasioned by the clashing of the great walls of the funnel, as they all met together at the bottom; but the yell that went up to the heavens from out of that mist I

dare not attempt to describe.

"Our first slide into the abyss itself, from the belt of foam above, had carried us a great distance down the slope; but our farther descent was by no means proportionate. Round and round we swept—not with any uniform movement—but in dizzying swings and jerks, that sent us sometimes only a few hundred yards, sometimes nearly the complete circuit of the whirl. Our progress downward, at each revolution, was slow, but

very perceptible.

"Looking about me upon the wide waste of liquid ebony on which we were thus borne, I perceived that our boat was not the only object in the embrace of the whirl. Both above and below us were visible fragments of vessels, large masses of building-timber, and trunks of trees, with many smaller articles, such as pieces of housefurniture, broken boxes, barrels and staves. I have already described the unnatural curiosity which had taken the place of my original terrors. It appeared to grow upon me as I drew nearer and nearer to my dreadful doom. I now began to watch, with a strange interest, the numerous things that floated in our company. I must have been delirious, for I even sought amusement in speculating upon the relative velocities of their several descents toward the foam below. 'This fir-tree,' I found myself at one time saying, 'will certainly be the next thing that takes the awful plunge and disappears;' and then I was disappointed to find that the wreck of a Dutch merchant-ship overtook it and went down before. At length, after making several guesses of this nature, and being eceived in all, this fact—the fact of my invariable mi calculation—set me upon a train of reflection that made my limbs again tremble, and my heart beat heavily once more.

"It was not a new terror that thus affected me, but the dawn of a more exciting hope. This hope arose partly from memory, and partly from present observation. I called to mind the great v riety of buoyant matter that strewed the coast of Lofoden, having been absorbed and then thrown forth by the Moskoe-strom. By far the greater number of the articles were shattered in the most extraordinary way—so chafed and roughened as to have the appearance of being stuck full of splinters: but then I distinctly recollected that there were some of them which were not disfigured at all. Now I could not account for this difference except by supposing that the roughened fragments were the only ones which had been completely absorbed—that the others had entered the whirl at so late a period of the tide, or, for some reason, had descended so slowly after entering, that they did not reach the bottom before the turn of the flood came, or of the ebb, as the case might be. I conceived it possible, in either instance, that they might thus be whirled up again to the level of the ocean, without undergoing the fate of those which had been drawn in more early, or absorbed more rapidly. I made, also, three important observations. The first was, that, as a general rule, the larger the bodies were, the more rapid their descent; the second, that, between two masses of equal extent, the one spherical, and the other of any other shape, the superiority in speed of descent was with the sphere; the third, that, between two masses of equal size, the one cylindrical and the other of any other shape, the cylinder was absorbed the more slowly. Since my escape, I have had several conversations on this subject with an old schoolmaster of the district; and it was from him that I learned the use of the words 'cylinder' and 'sphere.' He explained to me-although I have forgotten the explanation-how what I observed was, in fact, the natural consequence of the forms of the floating fragments; and showed me how it happened that a cylinder, swimming in a vortex, offered more resistance to its suction, and was drawn in with greater difficulty than an equally bulky body of any form whatever.*

"There was one startling circumstance which went a

^{*} See Archimedes, "De Incidentibus in Fluido."-Lib. 2.

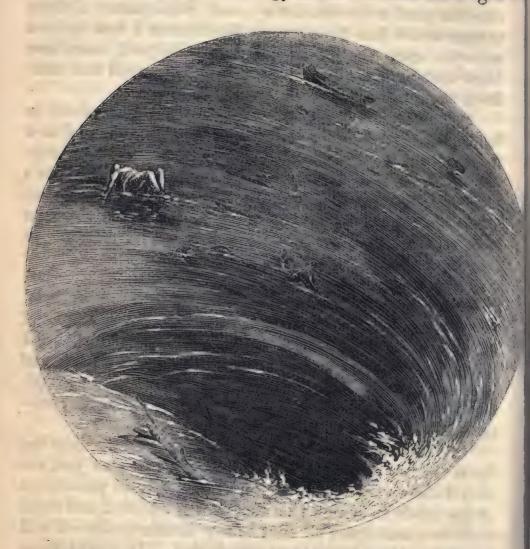
great way in enforcing these observations, and rendering me anxious to turn them to account, and this was, that at every revolution we passed something like a barrel, or else the yard or the mast of a vessel; while many of those things which had been on our level when I first opened my eyes upon the wonders of the whirlpool, were now high up above us, and seemed to have moved but little

from their original station.

"I no longer hesitated what to do. I resolved to lash myself securely to the water-cask upon which I now held, to cut it loose from the counter, and to throw myself with it into the water. I attracted my brother's attention by signs, pointed to the floating barrels that came near us, and did everything in my power to make him understand what I was about to do. I thought at length that he comprehended my design; but, whether this was the case or not, he shook his head despairingly, and refused to move from his station by the ring-bolt. It was impossible to reach him; the emergency admitted of no delay; and so, with a bitter struggle, I resigned him to his fate, fastened myself to the cask by means of the lashings which secured it to the counter, and precipitated myself with it into the sea, without another moment's hesitation.

"The result was precisely what I hoped it might be. As it is myself who now tell you this tale—as you see that I did escape—and as you are already in possession of the mode in which this escape was effected, and must therefore anticipate all that I have farther to say—I will bring my story quickly to conclusion. It might have been an hour, or thereabout, after my quitting the smack, when, having descended to a vast distance beneath me, it made three or four wild gyrations in rapid succession, and, bearing my loved brother with it, plunged headlong, at once and for ever, into the chaos of foam below. The barrel to which I was attached sank very little farther than half the distance between the bottom of the gulf and the spot at which I leaped overboard, before a great

change took place in the character of the whirlpool. The slope of the sides of the vast funnel became momently less and less steep. The gyrations of the whirl grew



gradually less and less violent. By degrees, the froth and the rainbow disappeared, and the bottom of the gulf seemed slowly to uprise. The sky was clear, the winds had gone down, and the full moon was setting radiantly in the west, when I found myself on the surface of the ocean, in full view of the shores of Lofoden, and above the spot where the pool of the Moskoe-strom had been. It was the hour of the slack; but the sea still heaved in mountainous waves from the effects of the hurricane.

I was borne violently into the channel of the Strom, and in a few minutes was hurried down the coast into the 'grounds' of the fishermen. A boat picked me up exhausted from fatigue, and (now that the danger was removed) speechless from the memory of its horror. Those who drew me on board were my old mates and daily companions; but they knew me no more than they would have known a traveller from the spirit land. My hair, which had been raven-black the day before, was as white as you see it now. They say, too, that the whole expression of my countenance had changed. I told them my story—they did not believe it. I now tell it to you; and I can scarcely expect you to put more faith in it than did the merry fishermen of Lofoden."



The Murders in the Rue Morgue.

"What song the Syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, although puzzling questions, are not beyond alternative."—Sir Thomas Browne.

HE mental features discoursed of as the analytical, are, in themselves, but little susceptible of analysis. We appreciate them only in their effects. We know of them, among other things, that they are always to their possessor, when inordinately possessed, a source of the liveliest

enjoyment. As the strong man exults in his physical ability, delighting in such exercises as call his muscles into action, so glories the analyst in that moral activity which disentangles. He derives pleasure from even the most trivial occupations bringing his talent into play. He is fond of enigmas, of conundrums, of hieroglyphics; exhibiting in his solutions of each a degree of acumen which appears to the ordinary apprehension preternatural. His results, brought about by the very soul and essence of method, have, in truth, the whole air of intuition.

The faculty of re-solution is possibly much invigorated by mathematical study, and especially by that highest branch of it which, unjustly, and merely on account of its retrograde operations, has been called, as if par excellence, analysis. Yet to calculate is not in itself to analyse. A chess-player, for example, does the one without effort at the other. It follows that the game of chess, in its effects upon mental character, is greatly

misunderstood. I am not now writing a treatise, but simply prefacing a somewhat peculiar narrative by observations very much at random; I will therefore take occasion to assert that the higher powers of the reflective intellect are more decidedly and more usefully tasked by the unostentatious game of draughts than by all the elaborate frivolity of chess. In this latter, where the pieces have different and bizarre motions, with various and variable values, what is only complex is mistaken (a not unusual error) for what is profound. The attention is here called powerfully into play. If it flag for an instant, an oversight is committed, resulting in injury or defeat. The possible moves being not only manifold but involute, the chances of such oversights are multiplied; and in nine cases out of ten it is the more concentrative rather than the more acute player who conquers. In draughts, on the contrary, where the moves are unique and have but little variation, the probabilities of inadvertence are diminished, and the mere attention being left comparatively unemployed, what advantages are obtained by either party are obtained by superior acumen. To be less abstract, let us suppose a game of draughts where the pieces are reduced to four kings, and where, of course, no oversight is to be expected. It is obvious that here the victory can be decided (the players being at all equal) only by some récherché movement, the result of some strong exertion of the intellect. Deprived of ordinary resources, the analyst throws himself into the spirit of his opponent, identifies himself therewith, and not unfrequently sees thus, at a glance, the sole methods (sometimes, indeed, absurdly simple ones) by which he may seduce into error or hurry into miscalculation.

Whist has long been noted for its influence upon what is termed the calculating power; and men of the highest order of intellect have been known to take an apparently unaccountable delight in it, while eschewing chess as frivolous. Beyond doubt there is nothing of a similar nature so greatly tasking the faculty of analysis.

The best chess-player in Christendom may be little more than the best player of chess; but proficiency in whist implies capacity for success in all those more important undertakings where mind struggles with mind. When I say proficiency, I mean that perfection in the game which includes a comprehension of all the sources whence legitimate advantage may be derived. These are not only manifold but multiform, and lie frequently among recesses of thought altogether inaccessible to the ordinary understanding. To observe attentively is to remember distinctly; and, so far, the concentrative chessplayer will do very well at whist, while the rules of Hoyle (themselves based upon the mere mechanism of the game) are sufficiently and generally comprehensible. Thus, to have a retentive memory and to proceed by "the book," are points commonly regarded as the sum total of good playing. But it is in matters beyond the limits of mere rule that the skill of the analyst is evinced; he makes in silence a host of observations and inferences. So, perhaps, do his companions; and the difference in the extent of the information obtained lies not so much in the validity of the inference as in the quality of the observation. The necessary knowledge is that of what to observe. Our player confines himself not at all; nor because the game is the object does he reject deductions from things external to the game. He examines the countenance of his partner, comparing it carefully with that of each of his opponents. He considers the mode of assorting the cards in each hand; often counting trump by trump, and honour by honour, through the glances bestowed by their holders upon each. He notes every variation of face as the play progresses, gathering a fund of thought from the differences in the expression of certainty, of surprise, of triumph, or of chagrin. From the manner of gathering up a trick he judges whether the person taking it can make another in the suit. He recognises what is played through feint, by the air with which it is thrown upon the table. A casual or inadvertent word: the accidental

dropping or turning of a card, with the accompanying anxiety or carelessness in regard to its concealment; the counting of the tricks, with the order of their arrangement; embarrassment, hesitation, eagerness, or trepidation—all afford to his apparently intuitive perception, indications of the true state of affairs. The first two or three rounds having been played, he is in full possession of the contents of each hand, and thenceforward puts down his cards with as absolute a precision of purpose as if the rest of the party had turned outward the faces of their own.

The analytical power should not be confounded with simple ingenious; for while the analyst is necessarily ingenious, the ingenious man is often remarkably incapable of analysis. The constructive or combining power, by which ingenuity is usually manifested, and to which phrenologists (I believe erroneously) have assigned a separate organ, supposing it a primitive faculty, has been so frequently seen in those whose intellect bordered otherwise upon idiocy, as to have attracted general observation among writers on morals. Between ingenuity and the analytic ability there exists a difference far greater indeed than that between the fancy and the imagination, but of a character very strictly analogous. It will be found, in fact, that the ingenious are always fanciful, and the truly imaginative never otherwise than analytic.

The narrative which follows will appear to the reader somewhat in the light of a commentary upon the

propositions just advanced.

Residing in Paris during the spring and part of the summer of 18—, I there became acquainted with a Monsieur C. Auguste Dupin. This young gentleman was of an excellent, indeed of an illustrious family; but, by a variety of untoward events, had been reduced to such poverty, that the energy of his character succumbed beneath it, and he ceased to bestir himself in the world or to care for the retrieval of his fortunes. By courtesy

of his creditors, there still remained in his possession a small remnant of his patrimony; and upon the income arising from this, he managed, by means of a rigorous economy, to procure the necessaries of life, without troubling himself about its superfluities. Books, indeed, were his sole luxuries; and in Paris these are easily obtained.

Our first meeting was at an obscure library in the Rue Montmartre, where the accident of our both being in search of the same very rare and very remarkable volume brought us into closer communion. We saw each other again and again. I was deeply interested in the little family history, which he detailed to me with all that candour which a Frenchman indulges whenever mere self is his theme. I was astonished, too, at the vast extent of his reading; and, above all, I felt my soul enkindled within me by the wild fervour and the vivid freshness of his imagination. Seeking in Paris the objects I then sought, I felt that the society of such a man would be to me a treasure beyond price, and this feeling I frankly confided to him. It was at length arranged that we should live together during my stay in the city; and as my worldly circumstances were somewhat less embarrassed than his own, I was permitted to be at the expense of renting and furnishing, in a style which suited the rather fantastic gloom of our common temper, a time-eaten and grotesque mansion, long deserted through superstitions into which we did not inquire, and tottering to its fall, in a retired and desolate portion of the Faubourg St. Germain.

Had the routine of our life at this place been known to the world, we should have been regarded as madmen; although, perhaps, as madmen of a harmless nature. Our seclusion was perfect; we admitted no visitors. Indeed, the locality of our retirement had been carefully kept a secret from my own former associates; and it had been many years since Dupin had ceased to know or be known in Paris. We existed within ourselves alone.

It was a freak of fancy in my friend (for what else shall I call it?) to be enamoured of the Night for her own sake; and into this bizarrerie, as into all his others, I quietly fell, giving myself up to his wild whims with a perfect abandon. The sable divinity would not herself dwell with us always, but we could counterfeit her presence. At the first dawn of the morning we closed all the massy shutters of our old building, lighting a couple of tapers which, strongly perfumed, threw out only the ghastliest and feeblest of rays. By the aid of these we busied our souls in dreams, reading, writing, or conversing, until warned by the clock of the advent of the true Darkness. Then we sallied forth into the streets, arm-in-arm, continuing the topics of the day or roaming far and wide until a late hour, seeking, amid the wild lights and shadows of the populous city, that infinity of mental excitement which quiet observation can afford.

At such times I could not help remarking and admiring (although from his rich ideality I had been prepared to expect it) a peculiar analytic ability in Dupin. He seemed, too, to take an eager delight in its exercise, if not exactly in its display, and did not hesitate to confess the pleasure thus derived. He boasted to me with a low chuckling laugh, that most men, in respect to himself, wore windows in their bosoms, and was wont to follow up such assertions by direct and very startling proofs of his intimate knowledge of my own. His manner at these moments was frigid and abstract, his eyes were vacant in expression; while his voice, usually a rich tenor, rose into a treble, which would have sounded petulantly but for the deliberateness and entire distinctness of the enunciation. Observing him in these moods, I often dwelt meditatively upon the old philosophy of the Bi-part Soul, and amused myself with the fancy of a double Dupin—the creative and the resolvent.

Let it not be supposed, from what I have just said, that I am detailing any mystery, or penning any romance. What I have described in the Frenchman was merely the

result of an excited, or perhaps of a diseased intelligence. But of the character of his remarks at the period in

question an example will best convey the idea.

We were strolling one night down a long dirty street, in the vicinity of the Palais Royal. Being both apparently occupied with thought, neither of us had spoken a syllable for fifteen minutes at least. All at once Dupin broke forth with these words:

"He is a very little fellow, that's true; and would do

better for the Théâtre des Variétés."

"There can be no doubt of that," I replied unwittingly, and not at first observing (so much had I been absorbed in reflection) he extraordinary manner in which the speaker had chimed in with my meditations. In an instant afterward I recollected myself, and my astonish-

ment was profound.

"Dupin," said I, gravely, "this is beyond my comprehension. I do not hesitate to say that I am amazed, and can scarcely credit my senses. How was it possible you should know I was thinking of——?" Here I paused, to ascertain beyond a doubt whether he really knew of whom I thought.

"Of Chantilly," said he; "why do you pause? You were remarking to yourself that his diminutive

figure unfitted him for tragedy."

This was precisely what had formed the subject of my reflections. Chantilly was a quondam cobbler of the Rue St. Denis, who, becoming stage-mad, had attempted the rôle of Xerxes, in Crébillon's tragedy so called, and

been notoriously pasquinaded for his plans.

"Tell me, for Heaven's sake," I exclaimed, "the method—if method there is—by which you have been enabled to fathom my soul in this matter!" In fact, I was even more startled than I would have been willing to express.

"It was the fruiterer," replied my friend, "who brought you to the conclusion that the mender of soles was not of sufficient height for Xerxes et id genus omne."

"The fruiterer? You astonish me! I know no fruiterer whomsoever."

"The man who ran up against you as we entered the

street-it may have been fifteen minutes ago."

I now remembered that, in fact, a fruiterer, carrying upon his head a lage basket of apples, had nearly thrown me down, by accident, as we passed from the Rue C—— into the thoroughfare where we stood; but what this had to do with Chantilly I could not possibly understand.

There was not a particle of charlatanerie about Dupin. "I will explain," he said; "and that you may comprehend all clearly, we will first retrace the course of your meditations, from the moment in which I spoke to you until that of the rencontre with the fruiterer in question. The larger links of the chain run thus—Chantilly, Orion, Dr. Nichols, Epicurus, stereotomy, the streetstones, the fruiterer."

There are few persons who have not, at some period of their lives, amused themselves in retracing the steps by which particular conclusions of their own minds have been attained. The occupation is often full of interest; and he who attempts it for the first time is astonished by the apparently illimitable distance and incoherence between the starting-point and the goal. What, then, must have been my amazement when I heard the Frenchman speak what he had just spoken, and when I could not help acknowledging that he had spoken the truth? He continued:

"We had been talking of horses, if I remember aright, just before leaving the Rue C—. This was the last subject we discussed. As we crossed into this street a fruiterer, with a large basket upon his head, brushing quickly pastus, thrust you upon a pile of pavingstones collected at a spot where the causeway is undergoing repair. You stepped upon one of the loose fragments, slipped, slightly strained your ankle, appeared vexed or sulky, muttered a few words, turned to look at

the pile, and then proceeded in silence. I was not particularly attentive to what you did; but observation has

become with me, of late, a species of necessity.

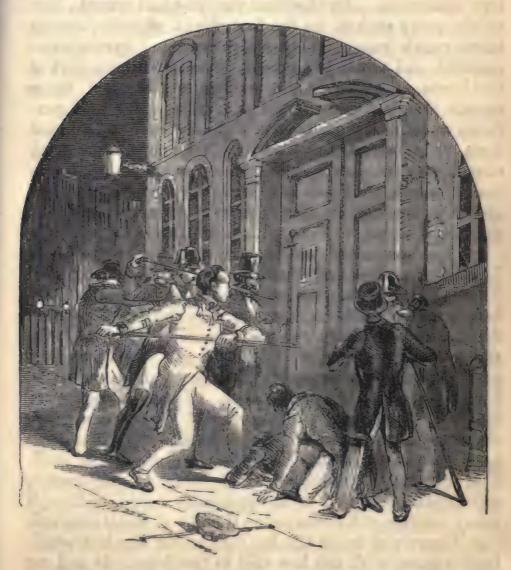
"You kept your eyes upon the ground—glancing, with a petulent expression, at the holes and ruts in the pavement (so that I saw you were still thinking of the stones), till we reached the little alley called "Lamartine," which had been paved, by way of experiment, with the overlapping and riveted blocks. Here your countenance brightened up; and, perceiving your lips move, I could not doubt that you murmured the word 'stereotomy 'a term very effectedly applied to this species of pavement. I knew that you could not say to yourself 'stereotomy' without being brought to think of atomies, and thus of the theories of Epicurus; and since, when we discussed this subject not very long ago, I mentioned to you how singularly, yet with how little notice, the vague guesses of that noble Greek had met with confirmation in the late nebular cosmogony, I felt that you could not avoid casting your eyes upward to the great nebula in Orion, and I certainly expected that you would do so. You did look up; and I was now assured that I had correctly followed your steps. But in that bitter tirade upon Chantilly, which appeared in yesterday's Musée, the satirist, making some disgraceful allusions to the cobbler's change of name upon assuming the buskin, quoted a Latin line about which we have often conversed. I mean the line

"Perdidit antiquum litera prima sonum."

I had told you that this was in reference to Orion, formerly written Urion; and, from certain pungencies connected with this explanation, I was aware that you could not have forgotten it. It was clear, therefore, that you would not fail to combine the two ideas of Orion and Chantilly. That you did combine them I saw by the character of the smile which passed over your lips. You thought of the poor cobbler's immolation. So far you had been stooping in your gait; but now I saw you draw yourself up to your full height. I was then sure that you reflected upon the diminutive figure of Chantilly. At this point I interrupted your meditations to remark that as, in fact, he was a very little fellow—that Chantilly—he would do better at the Théâtre des Variétés."

Not long after this, we were looking over an evening edition of the Gazette des Tribunaux, when the following

paragraphs arrested our attention.



"EXTRAORDINARY MURDERS.—This morning, about three o'clock, the inhabitants of the Quartier St. Roch

were aroused from sleep by a succession of terrificshrieks, issuing, apparently, from the fourth story of a house in the Rue Morgue, known to be in the sole occupancy of one Madame l'Espanaye, and her daughter Mademoiselle Camille l'Espanaye. After some delay, occasioned by a fruitless attempt to procure admission in the usual manner, the gateway was broken in with a crowbar, and eight or ten of the neighbours entered, accompanied by two gendarmes. By this time the cries had ceased; but, as the party rushed up the first flight of stairs, two or more rough voices, in angry contention, were distinguished, and seemed to proceed from the upper part of the house. As the second landing was reached, these sounds also had ceased, and everything remained perfectly quiet. The party spread themselves, and hurried from room to room. Upon arriving at a large back chamber in the fourth storey (the door of which, being found locked, with the key inside, was forced open), a spectacle presented itself which struck every one present not less with horror than with astonishment.

"The apartment was in the wildest disorder—the furniture broken and thrown about in all directions. There was only one bedstead; and from this the bed had been removed, and thrown into the middle of the floor. On a chair lay a razor, besmeared with blood. On the hearth were two or three long and thick tresses of grey human hair, also dabbled in blood, and seeming to have been pulled out by the roots. Upon the floor were found four Napoleons, an ear-ring of topaz, three large silver spoons, three smaller of métal d'Alger, and two bags containing nearly four thousand flanes in gold. The drawers of a bureau, which stood in one corner, were open, and had been apparently rifled, although many articles still remained in them. A small iron safe was discovered under the bed (not under the bedstead). It was open, with the key still in the door. It had no contents beyond a few old letters and other papers of little consequence.

"Of Madame l'Espanaye no traces were here seen; but an unusual quantity of soot being observed in the fire-place, a search was made in the chimney, and, horrible to relate! the corpse of the daughter, head downward, was dragged therefrom, it having been thus forced up the narrow aperture for a considerable distance. The body was quite warm. Upon examining it, many excoriations were perceived, no doubt occasioned by the violence with which it had been thrust up and disengaged. Upon the face were many severe scratches, and upon the throat dark bruises and deep indentations of finger-nails, as if the deceased had been throttled to death.

"After a thorough investigation of every portion of the house, without farther discovery, the party made its way into a small paved yard in the rear of the building. where lay the corpse of the old lady, with her throat so entirely cut that, upon an attempt to raise her, the head fell off. The body, as well as the head, was fearfully mutilated, the former so much so as scarcely to retain any semblance of humanity.

"To this horrible mystery there is not as yet, we

believe, the slightest clue."

The next day's paper had these additional particulars:—

"THE TRAGEDY IN THE RUE MORGUE.—Many individuals have been examined in relation to this most extraordinary and frightful affair, but nothing whatever has transpired to throw light upon it. We give below

all the material testimony elicited.

"Puuline Dubourg, laundress, deposes that she has known both the deceased for three years, having washed for them during that period. The old lady and her daughter seemed on good terms; very affectionate towards each other. They were excellent pay. Could not speak in regard to their mode or means of living. Believed that Madame L. told fortunes for a living. Was reputed to have money put by. Never met any persons

in the house when she called for the clothes or took them home. Was sure that they had no servant in employ. There appeared to be no furniture in any part

of the building except in the fourth storey.

" Pierre Moreau, tobacconist, deposes that he has been in the habit of selling small quantities of tobacco and snuff to Madame l'Espanaye for nearly four years. Was born in the neighbourhood, and has always resided there. The deceased and her daughter had occupied the house in which the corpses were found for more than six years. It was formerly occupied by a jeweller, who underlet the upper rooms to various persons. The house was the property of Madame L. She became dissatisfied with the abuse of the premises by her tenant, and moved into them herself, refusing to let any portion. The old lady was childish. Witness had seen the daughter some five or six times during the six years. The two lived an exceedingly retired life; were reputed to have money. Had heard it said among the neighbours that Madame L. told fortunes; did not believe it. Had never seen any person enter the door except the old lady and her daughter, a porter once or twice, and a physician some eight or ten times.

"Many other persons, neighbours, gave evidence to the same effect. No one was spoken of as frequenting the house. It was not known whether there were any living connexions of Madame L. and her daughter. The shutters of the front windows were seldom opened. Those in the rear were always closed, with the exception of the large back-room, fourth storey. The house was

a good house, not very old.

"Isidore Muset, gendarme, deposes that he was called to the house about three o'clock in the morning, and found some twenty or thirty persons at the gateway, endeavouring to gain admittance. Forced it open at length with a bayonet, not with a crowbar. Had but little difficulty in getting it open, on account of its being a double or folding gate, and bolted neither at bottom

nor top. The shrieks were continued until the gate was forced, and then suddenly ceased. They seemed to be screams of some person or persons in great agony; were loud and drawn out, not short and quick. Witness led the way up-stairs. Upon reaching the first landing, heard two voices in loud and angry contention-the one a gruffvoice, the other much shriler, a very strange voice. Could distinguish some words of the former, which was that of a Frenchman. Was positive that it was not a woman's voice. Could distinguish the words sacré and diable. The shrill voice was that of a foreigner. Could not be sure whether it was the voice of a man or of a woman. Could not make out what was said, but believed the language to be Spanish. The state of the room and of the bodies was described by this witness as we described them yesterday.

"Henri Duval, a neighbour, and by trade a silversmith, deposes that he was one of the party who first
entered the house. Corroborates the testimony of Musèt
in general. As soon as they forced an entrance, they
re-closed the door to keep out the crowd, which collected
very fast, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour. The
shrill voice, this witness thinks, was that of an Italian.
Was certain it was not French. Could not be sure that
it was a man's voice. It might have been a woman's.
Was not acquainted with the Italian language. Could
not distinguish the words, but was convinced by the
intonation that the speaker was an Italian. Knew
Madame L. and her daughter. Had conversed with
both frequently. Was sure that the shrill voice was

not that of either of the deceased.

"—— Odenheimer, restaurateur. This witness volunteered his testimony. Not speaking French, was examined through an interpreter. Is a native of Amsterdam. Was passing the house at the time of the shrieks. They lasted for several minutes, probably ten. They were long and loud; very awful and distressing. Was one of those who entered the building. Corrobo-

rated the previous evidence in every respect but one. Was sure that the shrill voice was that of a man—of a Frenchman. Could not distinguish the words uttered. They were loud and quick; unequal; spoken apparently in fear as well as in anger. The voice was harsh; not so much shrill as harsh. Could not call it a shrill voice. The gruff voice said, repeatedly, sacré, diable, and once mon Dieu.

"Jules Mignaud, banker, of the firm of Mignaud et Fils, Rue Deloraine. Is the elder Mignaud. Madame l'Espanaye had some property. Had opened an account with his banking-house in the spring of the year eight years previously. Made frequent deposits in small sums. Had checked for nothing until the third day before her death, when she took out in person the sum of 4000 francs. This sum was paid in gold, and a clerk sent home with the money.

"Adolphe Le Bon, clerk to Mignaud et Fils, deposes that on the day in question, about noon, he accompanied Madame l'Espanaye to her residence with the 4000 francs put up in two bags. Upon the door being opened, Mademoiselle L. appeared and took from his hands one of the bags, while the old lady relieved him of the other. He then bowed and departed. Did not see any person in the street at the time. It is a bye-street, very lonely.

"William Bird, tailor, deposes that he was one of the party who entered the house. Is an Englishman. Has lived in Paris two years. Was one of the first to ascend the stairs. Heard the voices in contention. The gruff voice was that of a Frenchman. Could make out several words, but cannot now remember all. Heard distinctly sacré and mon Dieu. There was a sound at the moment as if of several persons struggling—a scraping and scuffling sound. The shrill voice was very loud, louder than the gruff one. Is sure that it was not the voice of an Englishman. Appeared to be that of a German. Might have been a woman's voice. Does not understand German.

"Four of the above-named witnesses, being recalled, deposed that the door of the chamber in which was found the body of Mademoiselle L. was locked on the inside when the party reached it. Everything was perfectly silent; no groans or noises of any kind. Upon forcing the door no person was seen. The windows, both of the back and front room, were down, and firmly fastened from within. A door between the two rooms was closed. but not locked. The door leading from the front room into the passage was locked, with the key on the inside. A small room in the front of the house, on the fourth storey, at the head of the passage, was open, the door being ajar. This room was crouded with old beds, boxes, and so forth. These were carefully removed and searched. There was not an inch of any portion of the house which was not carefully searched. Sweeps were sent up and down the chimneys. The house was a fourstorey one, with garrets (mansardes). A trap-door on the roof was nailed down very securely; did not appear to have been open for years. The time clapsing between the hearing of the voices in contention and the breaking open of the room door was variously stated by the witnesses. Some made it as short as three minutes, some as long as five. The door was opened with difficulty.

"Alfonzo Garcio, undertaker, deposes that he resides in the Rue Morgue. Is a native of Spain. Was one of the party who entered the house. Did not proceed up stairs. Is nervous, and was apprehensive of the consequences of agitation. Heard the voices in contention. The gruff voice was that of a Frenchman. Could not distinguish what was said. The shrill voice was that of an Englishman—is sure of this, Does not understand the English language, but judges by the intonation.

the English language, but judges by the intonation. "Alberto Montani, confectioner, deposes that he was among the first to ascend the stairs. Heard the voices in question. The gruff voice was that of a Frenchman. Distinguished several words. The speaker appeared to be expostulating. Could not make out the words of the

shrill voice. Spoke quick and unevenly. Thinks it the voice of a Russian. Corroborates the general testimony. Is an Italian. Never conversed with a native of Russia.

"Several witnesses, recalled, here testified that the chimneys of all the rooms on the forth storey were too narrow to admit the passage of a human being. By 'sweeps' were meant cylindrical sweeping-brushes, such as are employed by those who clean chimneys. These brushes were passed up and down every flue in the house. There is no back passage by which any one could have descended while the party proceeded up stairs. The body of Mademoiselle l'Esyanaye was so firmly wedged in the chimney that it could not be got down until four or five of the party united their strength.

" Paul Dumas, physician, deposes that he was called to view the bodies about daybreak. They were both then lying on the sacking of the bedstead in the chamber where Mademoiselle L. was found. The corpse of the young lady was much bruised and excoriated. The fact that it had been thrust up the chimney would sufficiently account for these appearances. The throat was greatly chafed. There were several deep scratches just below the chin, together with a series of livid spots, which were evidently the impression of fingers. The face was fearfully discoloured, and the eye-balls protruded. The tongue had been partially bitten through. A large bruise was discovered upon the pit of the stomach produced aprarently by the pressure of a knee. In the opinion of M. Dumas, Mademoiselle l'Espanaye had been throttled to death by some person or persons unknown. The corpse of the mother was horribly mutilated. All the bones of the right leg and arm were more or less shattered. The left tibia much splintered, as well as all the ribs of the left side. Whole body dreadfully bruised and discoloured. It was not possible to say how the injuries had been inflicted. A heavy club of wood, or a broad bar of iron, a chair, any large, heavy and obtuse weapon, would have produced such results, if wielded by

the hands of a very powerful man. No woman could have inflicted the blows with any weapon. The head of the deceased, when seen by witness, was entirely separated from the body, and was also greatly shattered. The throat had evidently been cut with some very sharp instrument, probably with a razor.

"Alexandre Etienne, surgeon, was called with M. Dumas to view the bodies. Corroborated the testimony

and the opinions of M. Dumas.

"Nothing farther of importance was elicited, although several other persons were examined. A murder so mysterious and so perplexing in all its particulars was never before committed in Paris, if, indeed, a murder has been committed at all. The police are entirely at fault: an unusual occurrence in affairs of this nature. There is

not, however, the shadow of a clue apparent."

The evening edition of the paper stated that the greatest excitement still continued in the Quartier St. Roch, that the premises in question had been carefully re-searched, and fresh examinations of witnesses instituted, but all to no purpose. A postscript, however, mentioned that Adolphe le Bon, the banker's clerk, had been arrested and imprisoned, although nothing appeared to criminate him beyond the facts already detailed.

Dupin seemed singularly interested in the progress of this affair, at least so I judged from his manner, for he made no comments. It was only after the announcement that Le Bon had been imprisoned that he asked

me my opinion respecting the murders.

I could merely agree with all Paris in considering them an insoluble mystery. I saw no means by which

it would be possible to trace the murderer.

"We must not judge of the means," said Dupin, "by this shell of an examination. The Parisian police, so much extolled for acumen, are cunning, but no more. There is no method in their proceedings beyond the method of the moment. They make a vast parade of measures, but not unfrequently these are so ill adapted

to the objects proposed as to put us in mind of Monsieur Jourdain's calling for his robe de chambre—pour mieux entendre la musique. The results attained by them are not unfrequently surprising, but, for the most part, are brought about by simple diligence and activity. When these qualities are unavailing, their schemes fail. Vidocq, for example, was a good guesser, and a persevering man; but, without educated thought, he erred continually by the very intensity of his investigations. He impaired his vision by holding the object too close. He might see, perhaps, one or two points with unusual clearness, but in so doing he necessarily lost sight of the matter as a whole. Thus there is such a thing as being too profound. Truth is not always in a well; in fact, as regards the more important knowledge, I do believe that she is invariably superficial. The depth lies in the valleys where we seek her, and not upon the mountains-tops where she is found. The modes and sources of this kind of error are well typified in the contemplation of the heavenly bodies. To look at a star by glances, to view it in a side-long way, by turning toward it the exterior portions of the retina (more susceptible of feeble impressions of light than the interior), is to behold the star distinctly, is to have the best appreciation of its lustre, a lustre which grows dim just in proportion as we turn our vision fully upon it. A greater number of rays actually fall upon the eye in the latter case, but in the former there is the more refined capacity for comprehension. By undue profundity we perplex and enfeeble thought; and it is possible to make even Venus herself vanish from the firmament by a scrutiny too sustained, too concentrated, or too direct. As for these murders, let us enter into some examinations for ourselves before we make up an opinion respecting them. An inquiry will afford us amusement (I thought this an odd term, so applied, but said nothing); and besides, Le Bon once rendered me a service, for which I am not ungrateful. We will go and see the premises with our own eyes. I

know G-, the Prefect of Police, and shall have ro

difficulty in obtaining the necessary permission."

The permission was obtained, and we proceeded at once to the Rue Morgue. This is one of those miserable thoroughfares which intervene between the Rue Richelieu and the Rue St. Roch. It was late in the afternoon when we reached it, as this quarter is at a great distance from that in which we resided. The house was readily found, for there were still many persons gazing up at the closed shutters, with an objectless curiosity, from the opposite side of the way. It was an ordinary Parisian house, with a gateway, on one side of whick was a glazed watch-box, with a sliding panel in the window, indicating a loge de concierge. Before going in, we walked up the street, turned down an alley, and then, again turning, passed in the rear of the building; Durin meanwhile examining the whole neighbourhood, as well as the house, with a minuteness of attention for which I could see no possible object.

Retracing our steps, we came again to the front of the dwelling, rang, and, having shown our credentials, were admitted by the agents in charge. We went up stairs into the chamber where the body of Mademoiselle l'Espanaye had been found, and where both the deceased still lay. The disorders of the room had, as usual, been suffered to exist. I saw nothing beyond what had been stated in the Gazette des Tribunaux. Dupin scrutinized everything, not excepting the bodies of the victims. We then went into the other rooms and into the yard, a gendarme accompanying us throughout. The examination occupied us until dark, when we took our departure. On our way home my companion stepped in for a mo-

ment at the office of one of the daily papers.

I have said that the whims of my friend a

I have said that the whims of my friend were manifold, and that je les ménagais—(for this phrase there is no English equivalent). It was his humour, now, to decline all conversation on the subject of the murder, until about noon the next day. He then asked me,

suddenly, if I had observed anything peculiar at the

scene of the atrocity.

There was something in his manner of emphasising the word "peculiar" which caused me to shudder without knowing why.

"No, nothing peculiar," I said, "nothing more, at least, than we both saw stated in the paper."

"The Gazette," he replied, "has not entered, I fear, into the unusual horror of the thing. But dismiss the idle opinions of this print. It appears to me that this mystery is considered insoluble, for the very reason which should cause it to be regarded as easy of solution -I mean, for the outré character of its features. The police are confounded by the seeming absence of motive, not for the murder itself, but for the atrocity of the murder. They are puzzled, too, by the seeming impossibility of reconciling the voices heard in contention with the facts that no one was discovered up stairs but the assassinated Mademoiselle l'Espanaye, and that there were no means of egress without the notice of the party ascending. The wild disorder of the room; the corpse thrust, with the head downward, up the chimney; the frightful mutilation of the body of the old lady; these considerations, with those just mentioned, and others which I need not mention, have sufficed to paralyse the powers, by putting completely at fault the boasted acumen of the Government agents. They have fallen into the gross but common error of confounding the unusual with the abstruse. But it is by these deviations from the plane of the ordinary that reason feels its way, if at all, in its search for the true. In investigations such as we are now pursuing, it should not be so much asked 'what has occurred,' as 'what has occurred that has never occurred before.' In fact, the facility with which I shall arrive, or have arrived, at the solution of this mystery, is in the direct ratio of its apparent insolubility in the eyes of the police."

I stared at the speaker in mute astonishment.

"I am now awaiting," continued he, looking toward the door of our apartment—"I am now awaiting a person who, although perhaps not the perpetrator of these butcheries, must have been in some measure implicated in their perpetration. Of the worst portion of the crimes committed it is probable that he is innocent. I hope that I am right in this supposition; for upon it I build my expectation of reading the entire riddle. I look for the man here—in this room—every moment. It is true that he may not arrive, but the probability is that he will. Should he come, it will be necessary to detain him. Here are pistols, and we both know how to use them when occasion demands their use."

I took the pistols, scarcely knowing what I did, or believing what I heard, while Dupin went on, very much as if in a soliliquy. I have already spoken of his abstract manner at such times. His discourse was addressed to myself; but his voice, although by no means loud, had that intonation which is commonly employed in speaking to some one at a great distance. His eyes,

vacant in expression, regarded only the wall.

"That the voices heard in contention," he said, "by the party upon the stairs, were not the voices of the women themselves, was fully proved by the evidence. This relieves us of all doubt upon the question whether the old lady could have first destroyed the daughter, and afterward have committed suicide. I speak of this point chiefly for the sake of method; for the strength of Madame l'Espanaye would have been utterly unequal to the task of thrusting her daughter's corpse up the chimney, as it was found; and the nature of the wounds upon her own person entirely preclude the idea of self-destruction, Murder, then, has been committed by some third party; and the voices of this third party were those heard in contention. Let me now advert-not to the whole testimony respecting these voices—but to what we's peculiar in that testimony. Did you observe anything peculiar about it?"

I remarked that, while all the witnesses agreed in supposing the gruff voice to be that of a Frenchman, there was much disagreement in regard to the shrill, or,

as one individual termed it, the harsh voice.

"That was the evidence itself," said Dupin, "but it was not the peculiarity of the evidence. You have observed nothing distinctive. Yet there was something to be observed. The witnesses, as you remark, agreed about the gruff voice; they were here unanimous. But in regard to the shrill voice, the peculiarity is—not that they disagreed—but that, while an Italian, an Englishman, a Spaniard, a Hollander, and a Frenchman attempted to describe it, each one spoke of it as that of a foreigner. Each is sure that it was not the voice of one of his own countrymen. Each likens it-not to the voice of an individual of any nation with whose language he is conversant—but the converse. The Frenchman supposes it the voice of a Spaniard, and 'might have distinguished some words had he been acquainted with the Spanish.' The Dutchman maintains it to have been that of a Frenchman; but we find it stated that, 'not understanding French, this witness was examined through an interpreter.' The Englishman thinks it the voice of a German, and 'does not understand German.' The Spaniard 'is sure' that it was that of an Englishman, but 'judges by the intonation' altogether, 'as he has no knowledge of the English.' The Italian believes it the voice of a Russian, but 'has never conversed mith a native of Russia.' A second Frenchman differs, moreover, with the first, and is positive that the voice was that of an Italian; but, not being cognisant of that tongue, is, like the Spaniard, 'convinced by the intonation.' Now, how strangely unusual must that voice have really been about which such testimony as this could have been elicited!—in whose tones, even, denizens of the five great divisions of Europe could recognise nothing familiar! You will say that it might have been the voice of an Asiatic—of an African. Neither Asiatics nor Africans abound in Paris,

but, without denying the inference, I will now merely call your attention to three points, The voice is termed by one witness 'harsh rather than shrill.' It is represented by two others to have been 'quick and unequal. No words—no sounds resembling words—were by any

witness mentioned as distinguishable.

"I know not," continued Dupin, "what impression I may have made, so far, upon your own understanding; but I do not hesitate to say, that legitimate deductions even from this portion of the testimony—the portion respecting the gruff and shrill voices—are in themselves sufficient to engender a suspicion which should give direction to all farther progress in the investigation of the mystery, I said 'legitimate deductions;' but my meaning is not thus fully expressed. I designed to imply that the deductions are the sole proper ones, and that the suspicion arises inevitably from them as the single result. What the suspicion is, however, I will not say just yet. I merely wish you to bear in mind that, with myself, it was sufficiently forcible to give a definite form—a certain tendency—to make inquiries in the chamber.

"Let us now transport ourselves, in fancy, to this chamber. What shall we first seek here? The means of egress employed by the murderers. It is not too much to say, that neither of us believe in preternatural events. Madame and Mademoiselle l'Espanaye were not destroyed by spirits. The doers of the deed were material, and escaped materially. Then how? Fortunately, there is but one mode of reasoning upon the point, and that mode must lead us to a definite decision. Let us examine, each by each, the possible means of egress. It is clear that the assassins were in the room where Mademoiselle l'Espanaye was found, or at least in the room adjoining, when the party ascended the stairs. It is, then, only from these two apartments that we have to seek issues. The police have laid bare the floors, the ceilings, and the masonry of the walls, in every direction. No secret issues could have escaped

their vigilance. But, not trusting to their eyes, I examined with my own. There were, then, no secret issues. Both doors leading from the rooms into the passage were securely locked, with the keys inside. Let us turn to the chimneys. These, although of ordinary width for some eight or ten feet above the hearths, will not admit, throughout the extent, the body of a large cat. The impossibility of egress, by means already stated, being thus absolute, we are reduced to the windows. Through those of the front room no one could have escaped without notice from the crowd in the street. The murderers must have passed, then, through those of the back room. Now, brought to this conclusion in so unequivocal a manner as we are, it is not our part, as reasoners, to reject it on account of apparent impossibilities. It is only left for us to prove that these apparent 'impossibilities' are, in reality, not such.

"There are two windows in the chamber. One of them is unobstructed by furniture, and is wholly visible. The lower portion of the other is hidden from view by the head of the unwieldy bedstead which is thrust close up against it. The former was found securely fastened from within. It resisted the utmost force of those who endeavoured to raise it. A large gimlet-hole had been pierced in its frame to the left, and a very stout nail was found fitted therein, nearly to the head. Upon examining the other window, a similar nail was seen similarly fitted in it; and a vigorous attempt to raise this sash failed also. The police were now entirely satisfied that egress had not been in these directions. And therefore it was thought a matter of supererogation

to withdraw the nails, and open the windows.

"My own examination was somewhat more particular, and was so for the reason I have just given; because here it was, I knew, that all apparent impossibilities must be proved to be not such in reality.

"I proceeded to think thus—à posteriori. The murderers did escape from one of these windows. This being so, they could not have re-fastened the sashes from the inside, as they were found fastened; the consideration which put a stop, through its obviousness, to the serutiny of the police in this quarter. Yet the sashes were fastened. They must, then, have the power of fastening themselves. There was no escape from this conclusion. I stepped to the unobstructed casement, withdrew the nail with some difficulty, and attempted to raise the sash. It resisted all my efforts, as I had anticipated. A concealed spring must, I now knew, exist; and this corroboration of my idea convinced me that my premises, at least, were correct, however mysterious still appeared the circumstances attending the nails. A careful search soon brought to light the hidden spring. I pressed it, and, satisfied with the discovery, forbore to upraise the sash.

"I now replaced the nail, and regarded it attentively. A person passing out through this window might have reclosed it, and the spring would have caught; but the nail could not have been replaced. The conclusion was plain, and again narrowed in the field of my investigations. The assassins must have escaped through the other window. Supposing, then, the springs upon each sash to be the same, as was probable, there must be found a difference between the nails, or at least between the modes of their fixture. Getting upon the sacking of the bedstead, I looked over the head-board minutely at the second casement. Passing my hand down behind the board, I readily discovered and pressed the spring. which was, as I had supposed, identical in character with its neighbour. I now looked at the nail. It was as stout as the other, and apparently fitted in the same

manner; driven in nearly up to the head.

"You will say that I was puzzled; but, if you think so, you must have misunderstood the nature of the inductions. To use a sporting phrase, I had not been once 'at fault.' The scent had never for an instant been lost. There was no flaw in any link of the chain.

I had traced the secret to its ultimate result, and that result was the nail. It had, I say, in every respect, the appearance of its fellow in the other window; but this fact was an absolute nullity (conclusive as it might seem to be) when campared with the consideration that here, at this point, terminated the clue. 'There must be something wrong,' I said, 'about the nail.' I touched it; and the head, with about a quarter of an inch of the shank, came off in my fingers. The rest of the shank was in the gimlet-hole, where it had been broken off. The fracture was an old one (for its edges were incrusted with rust), and had apparently been accomplished by the blow of a hammer, which had partially imbedded, in the top of the bottom sash, the head portion of the nail. I now carefully replaced this head portion in the indentation whence I had taken it, and the resemblance to a perfect nail was complete; the fissure was invisible. Pressing the spring, I gently raised the sash for a few inches; the head went up with it, remaining firm in its bed. I closed the window, and the semblance of the whole nail was again perfect.

"The riddle, so far, was now unriddled. The assassin had escaped through the window which looked upon the bed. Dropping of its own accord upon his exit (or perhaps purposely closed), it had become fastened by the spring; and it was the retention of this spring which had been mistaken by the police for that of the nail; farther inquiry being thus considered un-

necessary.

"The next question is that of the mode of descent. Upon this point I had been satisfied in my walk with you around the building. About five feet and a half from the casement in question there runs a lightning-rod. From this rod it would have been impossible for any one to reach the window itself, to say nothing of entering it. I observed, however, that the shutters of the fourth storey were of the peculiar kind called by Parisian carpenters ferrades, a kind rarely employed at

the present day, but frequently seen upon very old mansions at Lyons and Bordeaux. They are in the form of an ordinary door (a single, not a folding-door), except that the lower half is latticed or worked in open trellis, thus affording an excellent hold for the hands. In the present instance these shutters are fully three feet and a half broad. When we saw them from the rear of the house, they were both about half open, that is to say, they stood off at right angles from the wall. It is probable that the police, as well as myself, examined the back of the tenement; but, if so, in looking at these ferrades, in the line of their breadth (as they must have done), they did not perceive this great breadth itself, or, at all events, failed to take it into due consideration. In fact, having once satisfied themselves that no egress could have been made in this quarter, they would naturally bestow here a very cursory examination. It was clear to me, however, that the shutter belonging to the window at the head of the bed, would, if swung fully back to the wall, reach to within two feet of the lightning-rod. It was also evident that, by exertion of a very unusual degree of activity and courage, an entrance into the window, from the rod, might have been thus effected. By reaching to the distance of two feet and a half (we now suppose the slutter open to its whole extent) a robber might have taken a firm grasp upon the trellis-work. Letting go, then, his hold upon the rod, placing his feet securely against the wall, and springing boldly from it, he might have swung the shutter so as to close it, and, if we imagine the window open at the time, might even have swung himself into the room.

"I wish you to bear especially in mind that I have spoken of a very unusual degree of activity as requisite to success in so hazardous and so difficult a feat. It is my design to show you—first, that the thing might possibly have been accomplished; but, secondly, and chiefly, I wish to impress upon your understanding the

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very extraordinary, the almost preternatural, character

of that agility which could have accomplished it.

"You will say, no doubt, using the language of the law, that 'to make out my case,' I should rather undervalue, than insist upon a full estimation of the activity required in this matter. This may be the practice in law, but it is not the usage of reason. My ultimate object is only the truth. My immediate purpose is to lead you to place in juxtaposition that very unusual activity of which I have just spoken with that very peculiar shrill (or harsh) and unequal voice about whose nationality no two persons could be found to agree, and in whose utterance no syllabification could be detected."

At these words a vague and half-formed conception of the meaning of Dupin flitted over my mind. I seemed to be upon the verge of comprehension without power to comprehend; as men, at times, find themselves upon the brink of remembrance, without being able, in the end, to remember. My friend went on

with his discourse.

You will see," he said, "that I have shifted the question from the mode of egress to that of ingress. It was my design to convey the idea that both were effected in the same manner, at the same point. Let us now revert to the interior of the room. Let us survey the appearances here. The drawers of the bureau, it is said, had been rifled, although many articles of apparel still remained within them. The conclusion here is absurd. It is a mere guess—a very silly one—and no more. How are we to know that the articles found in the drawers were not all these drawers had originally contained? Madame l'Espanaye and her daughter lived an exceedingly retired life, saw no company, seldom went out, had little use for changes of habiliment. Those found were at least of as good quality as any likely to be possessed by these ladies. If a thief had taken any, why did he not take the best—why did he not take all? In a word, why did he abandon four

thousand francs in gold to encumber himself with a bundle of linen? The gold was abandoned. Nearly the whole sum mentioned by Monsieur Mignaud, the banker, was discovered, in bags, upon the floor. I wish you, therefore, to discard from your thoughts the blundering idea of motive, engendered in the brains of the police by that portion of the evidence which speaks of money delivered at the door of the house. Coincidences ten times as remarkable as this (the delivery of the money, and murder committed within three days upon the party receiving it), happen to all of us every hour of our lives, without attracting even momentary notice. Coincidences, in general, are great stumbling-blocks in the way of that class of thinkers who have been educated to know nothing of the theory of probabilities, that theory to which the most glorious objects of human research are indebted for the most glorious of illustration. In the present instance, had the gold been gone, the fact of its delivery three days before would have formed something more than a coincidence. It would have been corroborative of this idea of motive. But, under the real circumstances of the case, if we are to suppose gold the motive of this outrage, we must also imagine the perpetrator so vacillating an idiot as to have abandoned his gold and his motive together.

"Keeping now steadily in mind the points to which I have drawn your attention—that peculiar voice, that unusual agility, and that startling absence of motive in a murder so singularly atrocious as this—let us glance at the butchery itself. Here is a woman strangled to death by manual strength, and thrust up a chimney, head downward. Ordinary assassins employ no such modes of murder as this. Least of all, do they thus dispose of the murdered. In the manner of thrusting the corpse up the chimney, you will admit that there was something excessively outré—something altogether irreconcileable with our common notions of human action, even when we suppose the actors the most depraved of men. Think,

too, how great must have been that strength which could have thrust the body up such an aperture so forcibly that the united vigour of several persons was

found barely sufficient to drag it down!

"Turn, now, to other indications of the employment of a vigour most marvellous. On the hearth were thick tresses-very thick tresses-of grey human hair. These had been torn out by the roots. You are aware of the great force necessary in tearing thus from the head even twenty or thirty hairs together. You saw the locks in question, as well as myself. Their roots (a hideous sight!) were clotted with fragments of the flesh of the scalp—sure token of the prodigious power which had been exerted in uprooting perhaps half-a-million of hairs at a time. The throat of the old lady was not merely cut, but the head absolutely severed from the body: the instrument was a mere razor. I wish you also to look at the brutal ferocity of these deeds. Of the bruises upon the body of Madame l'Espayne I do not speak. Monsieur Dumas, and his worthy coadjutor Monsieur Etienne, have pronounced that they were inflicted by some obtuse instrument; and so far these gentlemen are very correct. The obtuse instrument was clearly the stone pavement in the yard, upon which the victim had fallen from the window which looked in upon the bed. This idea, however simple it may now seem, escaped the police for the same reason that the breadth of the shutters escaped them; because, by the affair of the nails, their perceptions had been hermetically sealed against the possibility of the windows having ever been opened at all.

"If now, in addition to all these things, you have properly reflected upon the odd disorder of the chamber, we have gone so far as to combine the idea of an agility astounding, a strength superhuman, a ferocity brutal, a butchery without motive, a grotesquerie in horror absolutely alien from humanity, and a voice foreign in tone to the ears of men of many nations, and devoid of all

distinct or intelligible syllabification. What result, then, has ensued? What impression have I made upon your fancy?"

I felt a creeping of the flesh as Dupin asked me the question. "A madman," I said, "has done this deed—some raving maniac, escaped from a neighbouring

Maison de Santé."

"In some respects," he replied, "your idea is not irrelevant. But the voices of madmen, even in their wildest paroxysms, are never found to tally with that peculiar voice heard upon the stairs. Madmen are of some nation; and their language, however incoherent in its words, has always the coherence of syllabification. Besides, the hair of a madman is not such as I now hold in my hand. I disentangled this little tuft from the rigidly-clutched fingers of Madame l'Espanaye. Tell me what you can make of it."

"Dupin!" I said, completely unnerved, "this hair

is most unusual—this is no human hair!"

"I have not asserted that it is," said he; "but, before we decide this point, I wish you to glance at the little sketch I have here traced upon this paper. It is a fac-simile drawing of what has been described in one portion of the testimony 'as dark bruises, and deep indentations of finger-nails' upon the throat of Mademoiselle l'Espanaye; and in another (by Messrs. Dumas and Etienne), as a 'series of livid spots, evidently the impression of fingers.'"

"You will perceive," continued my friend, spreading out the paper upon the table before us, "that the drawing gives the idea of a firm and fixed hold. There is no slipping apparent. Each finger has retained—possibly until the death of the victim—the fearful grasp by which it originally embedded itself. Attempt, now, to place all your fingers, at the same time, in the respective impres-

sions as you see them."

I made the attempt in vain.

[&]quot;We are possibly not giving this matter a fair

trial," he said. "The paper is spread out upon a plane surface; but the human throat is cylindrical. Here is a billet of wood, the circumference of which is about that of the throat. Wrap the drawing around it, and try the experiment again."

I did so; but the difficulty was even more obvious than before. "This," I said, "is the mark of no human

hand."

"Read now," replied Dupin, "this passage from Cuvier."

It was a minute anatomical and generally descriptive account of the large fulvous ourang-outang of the East Indian Islands. The gigantic stature, the prodigious strength and activity, the wild ferocity, and the imitative propensities of these mammalia are sufficiently well known to all. I understood the full horrors of the murder at once.

"The description of the digits," said I, as I made an end of reading, "is in exact accordance with the drawing. I see that no animal but an ourang-outang, of the species here mentioned, could have impressed the indentations as you have traced them. This tuft of tawny hair, too, is identical in character with that of the beast of Cuvier. But I cannot possibly comprehend the particulars of this frightful mystery. Besides, there were two voices heard in contention; and one of them was

unquestionably the voice of a Frenchman."

"True; and you will remember an expression attributed almost unanimously, by the evidence, to this voice—the expression, 'Mon Dieu!' This, under the circumstances, has been justly characterised by one of the witnesses (Montani, the confectioner), as an expression of remonstrance or expostulation. Upon these two words, therefore, I have mainly built my hopes of a full solution of the riddle. A Frenchman was cognisant of the murder. It is possible—indeed it is far more than probable—that he was innocent of all participation in the blocdy transactions which took place.

The ourang-outang may have escaped from him. He may have traced it to the chamber; but, under the agitating circumstances which ensued, he could never have recaptured it. It is still at large. I will not pursue these guesses—for I have no right to call them more—since the shades of reflection upon which they are based are scarcely of sufficient depth to be appreciable by my own intellect, and since I could not pretend to make them intelligible to the understanding of another. We will call them guesses, then, and speak of them as such. If the Frenchman in question is indeed, as I suppose, innocent of this atrocity, this advertisement, which I left last night, upon our return home, at the office of 'Le Monde' (a paper devoted to the shipping interest, and much sought by sailors), will bring him to our residence."

He handed me a paper, and I read thus:-

CAUGHT—In the Bois de Boulogne, early in the morning of the — inst. (the morning of the murder), a very large tawny ourang-ontang of the Bornese species. The owner (who is ascertuined to be a sailor belonging to a Maltese vessel), may have the animal again, upon identifying it satisfactorily, and paying a few charges arising from its capture and keeping. Call at No. ——, Rue——, Faubourg St. Germain, au troisième.

"How was it possible," I asked, "that you should know the man to be a sailor, and belonging to a Maltese vessel?"

"I do not know it," said Dupin. "I am not sure of it. Here, however, is a small piece of ribbon, which, from its form, and from its greasy appearance, has evidently been used in tying the hair in one of those long queues of which sailors are so fond. Moreover, this knot is one which few besides sailors can tie, and is peculiar to the Maltese. I picked the ribbon up at the foot of the lightning-rod. It could not have belonged to either

of the deceased. Now if, after all, I am wrong in my induction from this ribbon, that the Frenchman was a sailor belonging to a Maltese vessel, still I can have done no harm in saying what I did in the advertisement. If I am in error, he will merely suppose that I have been misled by some circumstance into which he will not take the trouble to inquire. But if I am right, a great point is gained. Cognizant, although innocent of the murder, the Frenchman will naturally hesitate about replying to the advertisement—about demanding the ourang-outang. He will reason thus: - 'I am innocent; I am poor; my ourang-outang is of great value—to one in my circumstances a fortune of itself; why should I lose it through idle apprehensions of danger? Here it is, within my grasp. It was found in the Bois de Boulogne-at a vast distance from the scene of that butchery. How can it ever be suspected that a brute beast should have done the deed? The police are at fault—they have failed to procure the slightest clue. Should they even trace the animal, it would be impossible to prove me cognizant of the murder, or to implicate me in guilt on account of that cognizance. Above all, I am known. The advertiser designates me as the possessor of the beast. I am not sure to what limit his knowledge may extend. Should I avoid claiming a property of so great value, which it is known that I possess, I shall render the animal at least liable to suspicion. It is not my policy to attract attention either to myself or to the beast. I will answer the advertisement, get the ourang-outang, and keep it close until this matter has blown over."

At this moment we heard a step upon the stairs.

"Be ready," said Dupin, "with your pistols, but neither use them nor show them until at a signal from

myself."

The front door of the house had been left open, and the visitor had entered, without ringing, and advanced several steps upon the staircase. Now, however, he seemed to hesitate. Presently, we heard him descending. Dupin was moving quickly to the door, when we again heard him coming up. He did not turn back a second time, but stepped up with decision, and rapped at the door of our chamber.

"Come in," said Dupin, in a cheerful and hearty

tone.

A man entered. He was a sailor, evidently—a tall, stout, and muscular-looking person, with a certain daredevil expression of countenance, not altogether unprepossessing. His face, greatly sunburnt, was more than half hidden by whisker and mustachio. He had with him a huge oaken cudgel, but appeared to be otherwise unarmed. He bowed awkwardly, and bade us "good evening," in French accents, which, although somewhat Neufchatelish, were still sufficiently indicative of a Parisian origin.

"Sit down, my friend," said Dupin. "I suppose you have called about the ourang-outang. Upon my word, I almost envy you the possession of him; a remarkably fine, and no doubt a very valuable animal. How old do you suppose him to be?"

The sailor drew a long breath, with the air of a man relieved of some intolerable burden, and then replied, in an assured tone:

"I have no way of telling; but he can't be more than four or five years old. Have you got him here?"

"Oh, no; we had no conveniences for keeping him here. He is at a livery-stable in the Rue Dubourg, just by. You can get him in the morning. Of course, you are prepared to identify the property?"

"To be sure I am, sir."

"I shall be sorry to part with him," said Dupin.

"I don't mean that you should be at all this trouble for nothing, sir," said the man-"couldn't expect it. Am very willing to pay a reward for finding the animal; that is to say, anything in reason."

"Well," replied my friend, "that is all very fair, to be sure. Let me think—what should I have? Oh! I

will tell you. My reward shall be this-you shall give me all the information in your power about these mur-

ders in the Rue Morgue."

Dupin said the last words in a very low tone, and very quietly. Just as quietly, too, he walked toward the door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket. He then drew a pistol from his bosom, and placed it, without the least flurry, upon the table.

The sailor's face flushed up as if he were struggling with suffocation. He started to his feet and grasped his cudgel; but the next moment he fell back into his seat, trembling violently, and with the countenance of death itself. He spoke not a word. I pitied him from

the bottom of my heart.
"My friend," said Dupin, in a kind tone, "you are alarming yourself unnecessarily; you are, indeed. We mean you no harm whatever. I pledge you the honour of a gentleman and of a Frenchman that we intend you no injury. I perfectly well know that you are innocent of the atrocities in the Rue Morgue. It will not do, however, to deny that you are in some measure implicated in them. From what I have already said, you must know that I have had means of information about this matter-means of which you could never have dreamed. Now the thing stands thus. You have done nothing which you could have avoided-nothing, certainly, which renders you culpable. You were not even guilty of robbery, when you might have robbed with impunity. You have nothing to conceal. You have no reason for concealment. On the other hand, you are bound by every principle of honour to confess all you know. An innocent man is now imprisoned, charged with that crime of which you can point out the perpetrator."

The sailor had recovered his presence of mind, in a great measure, while Dupin uttered these words; but

his original boldness of bearing was all gone.

"So help me God," said he, after a brief pause, "I

will tell you all I know about this affair; but I do not expect you to believe one half I say—I should be a fool, indeed, if I did. Still, I am innocent, and I will make a clean breast, if I die for it."

What he stated was in substance this: - He had lately made a voyage to the Indian Archipelago. A party, of which he formed one, landed at Borneo, and passed into the interior on an excursion of pleasure. Himself and a companion had captured the ourangoutang. This companion dying, the animal fell into his own exclusive possession. After great trouble, occasioned by the intractable ferocity of his captive during the home voyage, he at length succeeded in lodging it safely at his own residence in Paris, where, not to attract toward himself the unpleasant curiosity of his neighbours, he kept it carefully secluded, until such time as it should recover from a wound in the foot, received from a splinter on board ship. His ultimate design was to sell it.

Returning home from some sailors' frolic on the night, or rather in the morning of the murder, he found the beast occupying his own bedroom, into which it had broken from a closet adjoining, where it had been, as was thought, securely confined. Razor in hand, and fully lathered, it was sitting before a looking-glass, attempting the operation of shaving, in which it had no doubt previously watched its master through the key-hole of the closet. Terrified at the sight of so dangerous a weapon, in the possession of an animal so ferocious, and so well able to use it, the man, for some moments, was at a loss what to do. He had been accustomed, however, to quiet the creature, even in its fiercest moods, by the use of a whip; and to this he now resorted. Upon sight of it, the ourang-outang sprang at once through the door of the chamber, down the stairs, and thence through a window, unfortunately open, into the street.
The Frenchman followed in despair—the ape, razor

still in hand, occasionally stopping to look back and gesticulate at its pursuer, until the latter had nearly

come up with it. It then again made off. In this manner the chase continued for a long time. The streets were profoundly quiet, as it was nearly three o'clock in the morning. In passing down an alley in the rear of the Rue Morgue, the fugitive's attention was arrested by a light gleaming from the open window of Madame l'Espanaye's chamber, in the fourth storey of her house. Rushing to the building, it perceived the lightning-rod, clambered up with inconceivable agility, grasped the shutter, which was thrown fully back against the wall, and, by its means, swung itself directly upon the head-board of the bed. The whole feat did not occupy a minute. The shutter was kicked open again by the

ourang-outang as it entered the room.

The sailor, in the meantime, was both rejoiced and perplexed. He had strong hopes of now re-capturing the brute, as it could scarcely escape from the trap into which it had ventured, except by the rod, where it might be intercepted as it came down. On the other hand, there was much cause for anxiety as to what it might do in the house. This latter reflection urged the man still to follow the fugitive. A lightning-rod is ascended without difficulty, especially by a sailor; but when he had arrived as high as the window, which lay far to his left his career was stopped: the most that he could accomplish was, to reach over so as to obtain a glimpse of the interior of the room. At this glimpse, he nearly fell from his hold through excess of horror. Now it was that those hideous shrieks arose upon the night which had startled from slumber the inmates of the Rue Morgue. Madame l'Espanaye and her daughter, habited in their night clothes, had apparently been occupied in arranging some papers in the iron chest already mentioned, which had been wheeled into the middle of the room. It was open and its contents lay beside it on the floor. The victim must have been sitting with their backs toward the win dows; and from the time elapsing between the ingres of the beast and the screams, it seems probable that i was not immediately perceived. The flapping-to of the shutter would naturally have been attributed to the wind.

As the sailor looked in, the gigantic animal had seized Madame l'Espanave by the hair, which was loose, as she had been combing it, and was flourishing the razor about her face, in imitation of the motions of a barber. The daughter lay prostrate and motionless; she had swooned. The screams and struggles of the old lady, during which the hair was torn from her head, had the effect of changing the probably pacific purpose of the ourang-outang into those of wrath. With one determined sweep of its muscular arm it nearly severed her head from her body. The sight of blood inflamed its anger into frenzy. Gnashing its teeth, and flashing fire from its eyes, it flew upon the body of the girl, and imbedded its fearful talons in her throat, retaining its grasp until she expired. Its wandering and wiid glances fell at this moment upon the head of the bed, over which the face of its master, rigid with horror, was just discernible. The fury of the beast, which no doubt still bore in mind the dreaded whip, was instantly converted into fear. Conscious of having deserved punishment, it seemed desirous of concealing its bloody deeds, and skipped about the chamber in an agony of nervous agitation; throwing down and breaking the furniture as it moved, and dragging the bed from the bedstead. In conclusion, it first seized the corpse of the daughter, and thrust it up the chimney, as it was found: then that of the old lady, which it immediately hurled through the window headlong.

As the ape approached the casement with its mutilated burden, the sailor shrank aghast to the rod, and, rather gliding than clambering down it. hurried at once home, dreading the consequences of the butchery, and gladly abandoning, in his terror, all solicitude about the fate of the ourang-outang. The words heard by the party upon the staircase were the Frenchman's exclamations of horror and affright, commingled with the fiendish jabberings of the brute.



I have scarcely anything to add. The Ourang-Outang must have escaped from the chamber by the rod, just before the breaking of the door. It must have closed the window as it passed through it. It was subsequently caught by the owner himself, who obtained for it a large sum at the Jardin des Plantes. Le Bon was instantly released, upon our narrative of the circumstances, with some comments from Dupin, at the bureau of the Perfect of Police. This functionary, however well disposed towards my friend, could not altogether conceal his chagrin at the turn which affairs had taken, and was fain to indulge in a sarcasm or two about the propriety of every person minding his own business.

propriety of every person minding his own business.

"Let him, talk" said Dupin, who had not thought it necessary to reply. "Let him discourse; it will ease his conscience. I am satisfied with having defeated him in his own castle. Nevertheless, that he failed in the solution of the mystery is by no means that matter for wonder which he supposes it; for, in truth, our friend the Prefect is somewhat too cunning to be profound. In his wisdom is no stamen. It is all head and no body. like the pictures of the Goddess Laverna—or, at best, all head and shoulders, like a codfish. But he is a good creature after all. I like him especially for one master stroke of cant, by which he has attained his reputation for ingenuity. I mean the way he has 'dénier ce qui est, et d'expliquer ce qui n'est pas'" (of denying that which is, and of explaining that which is not).*

[·] Rousseau-Nouvelle Heloise.

The Mystery of Marie Roget.*

HEN, in an article entitled "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," I endeavoured, about a year ago, to depict some very remarkable features in the mental character of my friend, the Che-

valier C. Auguste Dupin, it did not occur to me that I should ever resume the subject. This depicting of character constituted my design, and this design was thoroughly fulfilled in the wild train of circumstances brought to instance Dupin's idiosyncrasy. I might have adduced other examples, but I should have proved no Late events, however, in their surprising development, have startled me into some further details, which will carry with them the air of exterted confession. Hearing what I have lately heard, it would be indeed strange should I remain silent in regard to what I both heard and saw so long ago.

* In the present narrative the author, under pretence of relating the fate of a Parisian grisette, has followed in minute detail the essential facts of a murder which was committed in the vicinity of New York, and which occasioned an intense and long-enduring excitement, and the mystery attending which had remained unsolved at the period when the present article was originally written and published, viz., Nov. 1842.

The "Mystery of Mary Rogét" was composed at a distance from the

scene of the atrocity, and with no other means of investigation than the newspapers afforded. Thus much escaped the writer of which he could have availed himself had he been upon the spot, and visited the localities. It may not be improper to record, nevertheless, that the confessions of two persons (one of them the Madame Deluc of the narrative), made, at different periods, long subsequent to the publication, confirmed in full not only the general conclusion, but absolutely all the chief hypothetical details by which that conclusion was attained. Upon the winding up of the tragedy involved in the deaths of Madame l'Espanaye and her daughter, the Chevalier dismissed the affair at once from his attention, and relapsed into his old habits of moody reverie. Prone at all times to abstraction, I readily fell in with his humour; and, continuing to occupy our chambers in the Faubourg Saint Germain, we gave the Future to the winds, and slumbered tranquilly in the Present, weaving the dull world around us into dreams.

But these dreams were not altogether uninterrupted. It may readily be supposed that the part played by my friend in the drama at the Rue Morgue had not failed of its impression upon the fancies of the Parisian police. With its emissaries the name of Dupin had grown into a household word. The simple character of those in ductions by which he had disentangled the mystery never having been explained even to the Prefect, or to any other individual than myself, of course it is not surprising that the affair was regarded as little less than miraculous, or that the Chevalier's analytical abilities acquired for him the credit of intuition. His frankness would have led him to disabuse every inquirer of such prejudice; but his indolent humour forbade all farther agitation of a topic whose interest to himself had long ceased. It thus happened that he found himself the cynosure of the policial eyes; and the cases were not few in which attempt was made to engage his services at the Prefecture. One of the most remarkable instances was that of the murder of a young girl named Marie Rogêt.

This event occurred about two years after the atrocity in the Rue Morgue. Marie, whose Christian and family name will at once arrest attention from their resemblance to those of the unfortunate "cigar girl," was the only daughter of the widow Estelle Rogêt. The father had died during the child's infancy, and, from the period of his death until within eighteen months before the assassination which forms the subject of our narrative, the

mother and daughter had dwelt together in the Rue Pavée Saint Andrée; Madame there keeping a pension, assisted by Marie. Affairs went on thus until the latter had attained her twenty-second year, when her great beauty attracted the notice of a perfumer, who occupied one of the shops in the basement of the Palais Royal,



and whose custom lay chiefly among the desperate adventurers infesting that neighbourhood. Monsieur Le Blanc was not unaware of the advantages to be derived from the attendance of the fair Marie in his perfumery, and his liberal proposals were accepted eagerly by the girl, although with somewhat more of hesitation by Madame.

The anticipations of the shopkeeper were realised,

and his rooms soon became notorious through the charms of the sprightly grisette. She had been in his employ about a year when her admirers were thrown into confusion by her sudden disappearance from the shop. Monsieur Le Blanc was unable to account for her absence, and Madame Rogêt was distracted with anxiety and terror. The public papers immediately took up the theme, and the police were upon the point of making serious investigations, when, one fine morning, after the lapse of a week, Marie, in good health, but with a somewhat saddened air, made her re-appearance at her usual counter in the perfumery. All inquiry, except that of a private character, was of course immediately hushed. Monsieur Le Blanc professed total ignorance, as before. Marie, with Madame, replied to all questions that the last week had been spent at the house of a relation in the country. Thus the affair died away, and was generally forgotten; for the girl, ostensibly to relieve herself from the impertinence of curiosity, soon bade a final adieu to the perfumer, and sought the shelter of her mother's residence in the Rue Pavée Saint Andrée.

It was about five months after this return home that her friends were alarmed by her sudden disappearance for the second time. Three days elapsed, and nothing was heard of her. On the fourth, her corpse was found floating in the Seine, near the shore which is opposite the Quartier of the Rue Saint Andrée, and at the point not very far distant from the secluded

neighbourhood of the Barrière du Roule.

The atrocity of this murder (for it was at once evident that murder had been committed), the youth and beauty of the victim, and, above all, her previous notoriety, conspired to produce intense excitement in the minds of the sensitive Parisians. I can call to mind no similar occurrence producing so general and so intense an effect. For several weeks, in the discussion of this one absorbing theme, even the momentous political topics of the day were forgotten. The Prefect made

unusual exertions; and the powers of the whole Parisian police were, of course, tasked to the utmost extent.

Upon the first discovery of the corpse, it was not supposed that the murderer would be able to elude, for more than a very brief period, the inquisition which was immediately set on foot. It was not until the expiration of a week that it was deemed necessary to offer a reward; and even then this reward was limited to a thousand francs. In the meantime the investigation proceeded with vigour, if not always with judgment, and numerous individuals were examined to no purpose; while, owing to the continual absence of all clue to the mystery, the popular excitement greatly increased. At the end of the tenth day, it was thought advisable to double the sum originally proposed; and, at length, the second week having elapsed without leading to any discoveries, and the prejudice which always exists in Paris against the police having given vent to itself in several serious émeutes. the Prefect took it upon himself to offer the sum of twenty thousand francs "for the conviction of the assassin;" or. if more than one should prove to have been implicated "for the conviction of any one of the assassins." In the proclamation setting forth this reward a full pardon was promised to any accomplice who should come forward in evidence against his fellow; and to the whole was appended, wherever it appeared, the private placard or a committee of citizens, offering ten thousand francs, in addition to the amount proposed by the Prefecture. The entire reward thus stood at no less than thirty thousand francs, which will be regarded as an extraordinary sun when we consider the humble condition of the girl, and the great frequency in large cities of such atrocities as the one described.

No one doubted now that the mystery of this murder would be immediately brought to light. But although in one or two instances, arrests were made which pro mised elucidation, yet nothing was elicited which could implicate the parties suspected; and they were discharged forthwith. Strange as it may appear, the third week from the discovery of the body had passed—and passed without any light being thrown upon the subject-before even a rumour of the events which had so agitated the public mind reached the ears of Dupin and myself. Engaged in researches which had absorbed our whole attention, it had been nearly a month since either of us had gone abroad or received a visitor, or more than glanced at the leading political articles in one of the daily papers. The first intelligence of the murder was brought us by G--- in person. He called upon us early in the afternoon of the thirteenth of July, 18-, and remained with us until late in the night. He had been piqued by the failure of all his endeavours to ferret out the assassins. His reputation—so he said, with a peculiarly Parisian air-was at stake. Even his honour was concerned. The eyes of the public were upon him; and there was really no sacrifice which he would not be willing to make for the development of the mystery. He concluded a somewhat droll speech with a compliment upon what he was pleased to term the tact of Dupin, and made him a direct, and certainly a liberal proposition, the precise nature of which I do not feel myself at liberty to disclose, but which has no bearing upon the proper subject of my narrative.

The compliment my friend rebutted as best he could, but the proposition he accepted at once, although its advantages were altogether provisional. This point being settled, the Prefect broke forth into explanations of his own views, interspersing them with long comments upon the evidence; of which latter we were not yet in possession. He discoursed much, and, beyond doubt, learnedly; while I hazarded an occasional suggestion as the night wore drowsily away. Dupin, sitting steadily in his accustomed arm-chair, was the embodiment of respectful attention. He wore spectacles during the whole interview; and an occasional glance beneath their green

glasses sufficed to convince me that he slept not the less soundly, because silently, throughout the seven or eight leaden-footed hours which immediately preceded the departure of the Prefect.

In the morning I procured, at the Prefecture, a full report of all the evidence elicited, and at the various



newspaper-offices a copy of every paper in which, from first to last, had been published any decisive information in regard to this sad affair. Free from all that was positively disproved, this mass of information stood thus:—

Marie Rogêt left the residence of her mother, in the Rue Pavée St. Andrée, about nine o'clock in the morning of Sunday, June the twenty-second, 18—. In going out she gave notice to a Monsieur Jacques St. Eustache, and to him only, of her intention to spend the day with

an aunt who resided in the Rue des Drômes. The Rue des Drômes is a short and narrow but populous thoroughfare, not far from the banks of the river, and at a distance of some two miles, in the most direct course possible, from the pension of Madame Rogêt. St. Eustache was the accepted suitor of Marie, and lodged, as well as took his meals, at the pension. He was to have gone for his betrothed at dusk, and to have escorted her home-In the afternoon, however, it came on to rain heavily; and, supposing that she would remain all night at her aunt's (as she had done under similar circumstances before), he did not think it necessary to keep his pro mise. As night drew on, Madame Rogêt (who was an infirm old lady, seventy years of age) was heard to express a fear "that she should never see Marie again;" but this observation attracted little attention at the

On Monday it was ascertained that the girl had not been to the Rue des Drômes; and when the day elapsed without tidings of her, a tardy search was instituted at several points in the city and its environs. It was not, however, until the fourth day from the period of her disappearance that anything satisfactory was ascertained respecting her. On this day (Wednesday, the twenty-fifth of June) a Monsieur Beauvais, who, with a friend, had been making inquiries for Marie near the Barrière du Roule, on the shore of the Seine which is opposite the Rue Pavée St. Andrée, was informed that a corpse had just been towed ashore by some fishermen, who had found it floating in the river. Upon seeing the body, Beauvais, after some hesitation, identified it as that of the perfumery-girl. His friend recognised it more promptly.

The face was suffused with dark blood, some of which issued from the mouth. No foam was seen, as in the case of the merely drowned. There was no discolouration in the cellular tissue. About the throat were bruises and impressions of fingers. The arms were bent over on the chest and were rigid. The right hand was

clenched, the left partially open. On the left wrist were two circular excoriations, apparently the effect of ropes, or of a rope in more than one volution. A part of the right wrist also was much chafed, as well as the back throughout its extent, but more especially at the shoulder-blades. In bringing the body to the shore the fishermen had attached it to a rope; but none of the excoriations had been effected by this. The flesh of the neck was much swollen. There were no cuts apparent, or bruises which appeared the effect of blows. A piece of lace was found tied so tightly around the neck as to be hidden from sight; it was completely buried in the flesh, and was fastened by a knot, which lay just under the left ear. This alone would have sufficed to produce death. The medical testimony spoke confidently of the virtuous character of the deceased. She had been subjected, it said, to brutal violence. The corpse was in such condition when found that there could have been no difficulty in its recognition by friends.

The dress was much torn and otherwise disordered. In the outer garment a slip, about a foot wide, had been torn upward from the bottom hem to the waist, but not torn off. It was wound three times round the waist, and secured by a sort of hitch in the back. The dress immediately beneath the frock was of fine muslin; and from this a slip eighteen inches wide had been torn entirely out—torn very evenly and with great care. It was found around her neck, fitting loosely, and secured with a hard knot. Over this muslin slip and the slip of lace the strings of a bonnet were attached, the bonnet being appended. The knot by which the strings of the bonnet were fastened was not a lady's, but a slip or sailor's knot.

After the recognition of the corpse, it was not, as usual, taken to the Morgue (this formality being superfluous), but hastily interred not far from the spot at which it was brought ashore. Through the exertions of Beauvais the matter was industriously hushed up, as far a:

possible; and several days had elapsed before any public emotion resulted. A weekly paper, however, at length took up the theme; the corpse was disinterred, and a re-examination instituted; but nothing was elicited be yond what has been already noted. The clothes, however, were now submitted to the mother and friends of the deceased, and fully identified as those worn by the

girl upon leaving home.

Meantime, the excitement increased hourly. Several individuals were arrested and discharged. St. Eustache fell especially under suspicion; and he failed at first to give an intelligible account of his whereabouts during the Sunday on which Marie left home. Subsequently, however, he submitted to Monsieur G-, affidavits accounting satisfactorily for every hour of the day in question. As time passed and no discovery ensued, a thousand contradictory rumours were circulated, and journalists busied themselves in suggestions. Among these, the one which attracted the most notice was the idea that Marie Rogêt still lived; that the corpse found in the Seine was that of some other unfortunate. It will be proper that I submit to the reader some passages which embody the suggestion alluded to. These passages are literal translations from L'Etoile, a paper conducted in general with much ability.*

[&]quot;Mademoiselle Roget left her mother's house on Sunday morning, June the twenty-second, 18—, with the ostensible purpose of going to see her aunt or some other connexion in the Rue des Drômes. From that hour nobody is proved to have seen her. There is no trace or tidings of her at all. " " There has no person whatever come forward, so far, who saw her at all on that day, after she left her mother's door. " Now, though we have no evidence that Marie Roget was in the land of the living after nine o'clock on Sunday, June the twenty-second, we have proof that up to that hour she was alive. On Wednesday noon at twelve a female body was discovered afloat on the shore of the Barrière du Roule. This was, even if we presume that Marie Roget was thrown into the river within three hours after she left her mother's house, only three days from the time she left her home—three days to an hour. But it is folly to suppose that the murder, if murder were committed on her body, could have been consummated soon enough to have enabled her

[&]quot;All the following extracts, assumed to be quoted from the Paris newspapers, are exact transcripts of articles which appeared in the New York journals. The names of people and places only have been changed.

murderers to throw the body into the river before midnight. Those who are guilty of such horrid crimes choose darkness rather than light. Thus we see that if the body found in the river was that of Marie Rogêt, it could only have been in the water two and a half days, or three days at the outside. All experience has shown that drowned bodies, or bodies thrown into the water immediately after death by violence, require from six to ten days for sufficient decomposition to take place to bring them to the top of the water. Even where a cannon is fired over a corpse, and it rises before at least five or six days' immersion, it sinks again if let alone. Now, we ask what was there in this case to cause a departure from the ordinary course of nature? * * * If the body had been kept in its mangled state on shere until Tuesday night, some trace would be found on shore of the murderers. It is a doubtful point, also, whether the body would be so soon affoat, even were it thrown in after having been dead two days. And, furthermore, it is exceedingly improbable that any villains who had committed such a murder as is here supposed would have thrown the body in without a weight to sink it, when such a precaution could so easily have been taken."

The editor here proceeds to argue that the body must have been in the water "not three days merely, but at least five times three days," because it was so far decomposed that Beauvais had great difficulty in recognising it. This latter point, however, was fully disproved. I continue the translation:

"What, then are the facts on which M. Beauvais says that he has no doubt the body was that of Marie Rogêt? He ripped up the gown sleeve, and says that he found marks which satisfied him of the identity. The public generally supposed those marks to have consisted of some description of scars. He rubbed the arm and found hair upon it; something as indefinite, we think, as can readily be imagined—as little conclusive as finding an arm in the sleeve. M. Beauvais did not return that night, but sent word to Madame Rogêt, at even o'clock on Wednesday evening, that an investigation was still in progress respecting her daughter. If we allow that Madame Rogêt, from her age and grief, could not go over (which is allowing a great deal), there certainly must have been some one who would have thought it worth his while to go over and attend the investigation if they thought the body was that of Marie. Nobody went over. There was nothing said or heard about the matter in the Rue Pavée St. Andrée that reached even the occupants of the same building. M. St. Eustache, the lover and intended husband of Marie, who boarded in her mother's house, deposes that he did not hear of the discovery of the body of his intended until the next morning, when M. Beauvais came into his chamber and told him of it. For an item of news like this it strikes us it was very coolly received."

In this way the journal endeavoured to create the impression of an apathy on the part of the relatives of Marie, inconsistent with the supposition that these relatives believed the corpse to be hers. Its insinuations amount to this: that Marie, with the connivance of her friends, had absented herself from the city for reasons involving a charge against her chastity; and that these

friends, upon the discovery of a corpse in the Seine, somewhat resembling that of the girl, had availed themselves of the opportunity to impress the public with the belief of her death. But L'Etoile was again over-hasty. It was distinctly proved that no apathy, such as was imagined, existed; that the old lady was exceedingly feeble, and so agitated as to be unable to attend to any duty; that St. Eustache, so far from receiving the news coolly, was distracted with grief, and bore himself so frantically that M. Beauvais prevailed upon a friend and relative to take charge of him, and prevent his attending the examination at the disinterment. Moreover, although it was stated by L'Etoile that the corpse was re-interred at the public expense, that an advantageous offer of private sepulture was absolutely declined by the family, and that no member of the family attended the ceremonial-although, I say, all this was asserted by L'Etoile in furtherance of the impression it desired to convey, yet all this was satisfactorily disproved. In a subsequent number of the paper an attempt was made to throw sus picion upon Beauvais himself. The editor says,

"Now, then, a change comes over the matter. We are told that on one occasion, while a Madame B— was at Madame Rogêt's house, M. Beauvais, who was going out, told her that a gen larme was expected there, and that she, Madame B., must not say anything to the gendarme until he returned, but let the matter be for him. " " In the present posture of affairs M. Beauvais appears to have had the whole matter locked up in his head. A single step cannot be taken without M. Beauvais! for go which way you will, you run against him. " " For some reason he determined that nobody but himself should have anything to do with the proceedings; and he has elbowed the male relatives out of the way, according to their representations, in a very singular manner. He seems to have been very much averse to permitting the relatives to see the body."

By the following fact some colour was given to the suspicion thus thrown upon Beauvais. A visitor at his office, a few days prior to the girl's disappearance, and during the absence of its occupant, had observed a rose in the keyhole of the door, and the name "Marie" inscribed upon a slate which hung near at hand.

The general impression, so far as we were enabled to glean it from the newspapers, seemed to be, that Marie

had been the victim of a gang of desperadoes; that by these she had been borne across the river, maltreated, and murdered. Le Commerciel, however, a print of extensive influence, was earnest in combating this popular idea. I quote a passage or two from its columns:

"We are persuaded that pursuit has hitherto been on a false scent, so far as it has been directed to the Barrière du Roule. It is impossible that a person so well known to thousands as this young woman was should have passed three blocks without some one having seen her; and any one who saw her would have remembered it, for she interested all who knew her. It was when the streets were full of people when she went out.

"It is impossible that she could have gone to the Barrière du Roule or to the Rue des Drômes without being recognised by a dozen persons; yet no one has come forward who has seen her outside her mother's door, and there is no evidence, except the testimony concerning her expressed intentions, that she did go out at all. Her gown was torn, bound round her, and tied; and by that the body was carried as a bundle. If the murder had been committed at the Barrière du Roule there would have been no necessity for any such arrangement. The fact that the body was found floating near the Barrière is no proof as to where it was thrown into the water.

"A piece of one of the unfortunate girl's petticoats, two feet long and one foot wide, was torn out and tied under her chin around the back of her head, probably to prevent screams. This was done by fellows who had no pocket-handkerchief."

A day or two before the Prefect called upon us, how ever, some important information reached the police, which seemed to overthrow, at least, the chief portion of Le Commerciel's argument. Two small boys, the sons of a Madame Deluc, while roaming among the woods near the Barrière du Roule, chanced to penetrate a close thicket, within which were three or four large stones, forming a kind of seat, with a back and footstool. On the upper stone lay a white petticoat, on the second a silk scarf. A parasol, gloves, and a pocket-handkerchief were also here found. The handkerchief bore the name of "Marie Rogêt." Fragments of dress were discovered on the brambles around. The earth was trampled, the bushes were broken, and there was every evidence of a struggle. Between the thicket and the river the fences were found taken down, and the ground bore evidence of some heavy burden having been dragged along it.

A weekly paper, Le Soleil, had the following comments upon this discovery—comments which merely echoed the sentiment of the whole Parisian press:—

"The things had all evidently been there at least three or four weeks; they were all mildewed down hard with the action of the rain, and stuck together from mildew. The grass had grown around and over some of them. The silk on the parasol was strong, but the threads of it were run together within. The upper part, where it had been doubled and folded, was all mildewed and rotten, and tore on its being opened. * * * The pieces of her frock torn out by the bushes were about three inches wide and six inches long. One part was the hem of the frock, and it had been mended; the other piece was part of the skirt, not the hem. They looked like strips torn off, and were on the thorn-bush, about a foot from the ground. * * * There can be no doubt, therefore, that the spot of this appalling outrage has been discovered."

Consequent upon this discovery, new evidence appeared. Madame Deluc testified that she keeps a roadside inn not far from the bank of the river, opposite the Barrière du Roule. The neighbourhood is secluded, particularly so. It is the usual Sunday resort of blackguards from the city, who cross the river in boats. About three o'clock in the afternoon of the Sunday in question, a young girl arrived at the inn, accompanied by a young man of dark complexion. The two remained here for some time. On their departure they took the road to some thick woods in the vicinity. Madame Deluc's attention was called to the dress worn by the girl, on account of its resemblance to one worn by a deceased relative. A scarf was particularly noticed. Soon after the departure of the couple, a gang of miscreants made their appearance, behaved boisterously, ate and drank without making payment, followed in the route of the young man and girl, returned to the inn about dusk, and recrossed the river as if in great haste.

It was soon after dark, upon this same evening, that Madame Deluc, as well as her eldest son, heard the screams of a female in the vicinity of the inn. The screams were violent but brief. Madame D. recognised not only the scarf which was found in the thicket, but the dress which was discovered upon the corpse. An omnibus-driver, Valence, now also testified that he saw Marie Rogêt cross a ferry on the Seine, on the Sunday in question, in company with a young man of dark complexion. He (Valence) knew Marie, and could not be

mistaken in her identity. The articles found in the thicket were fully identified by the relatives of Marie.

The items of evidence and information thus collected by myself from the newspapers, at the suggestion of Dupin, embraced only one more point; but this was a point of seemingly vast consequence. It appears that, immediately after the discovery of the clothes as above described, the lifeless, or nearly lifeless body of St. Eustache, Marie's betrothed, was found in the vicinity of what all now supposed the scene of the outrage. A phial labelled "laudanum," and emptied, was found near him. His breath gave evidence of the poison. He died without speaking. Upon his person was found a letter, briefly stating his leve for Marie, with his

design of self-destruction.

"I need scarcely tell you," said Dupin, as he finished the perusal of my notes, "that this is a far more intricate case than that of the Rue Morgue; from which it differs in one important respect. This is an ordinary, although an atrocious instance of crime. There is nothing peculiarly outré about it. You will observe that for this reason the mystery has been considered easy, when for this reason it should have been considered difficult, of solution. Thus, at first, it was thought unnecessary to offer a reward. The myrmidons of G-were able at once to comprehend how and why such an atrocity might have been committed. They could picture to their imaginations a mode—many modes, and a motive many motives; and because it was not impossible that either of these numerous modes and motives could have been the actual one, they have taken it for granted that one of them must. But the ease with which these variable fancies were entertained, and the very plausibility which each assumed, should have been understood as indicative rather of the difficulties than of the facilities which must attend elucidation. I have before observed that it is by prominences above the plane of the ordinary, that reason feels her way, if at all, in her search for the true, and that the proper question in cases such as this, is not so much 'what has occurred?' as 'what has occurred that has never occurred before?' In the investigations at the house of Madame l'Espanaye,* the agents of G—— were discouraged and confounded by that very unusualness which, to a properly regulated intellect, would have afforded the surest omen of success; while this same intellect might have been plunged in despair at the ordinary character of all that met the eye in the case of the perfumery-girl, and yet told of nothing but easy triumph to the functionaries of the Prefecture.

"In the case of Madame l'Espanay and her daughter there was, even at the beginning of our investigation, no doubt that murder had been committed. The idea of suicide was excluded at once. Here, too, we are freed, at the commencement, from all supposition of self-murder. The body found at the Barrière du Roule was found under such circumstances as to leave us no room for embarrassment upon this important point. But it has been suggested that the corpse discovered is not that of the Marie Rogêt for the conviction of whose assassin, or assassins, the reward is offered, and respecting whom, solely, our agreement has been arranged with the Prefect. We both know this gentlemen, well. It will not do to trust him too far. If, dating our inquiries from the body found, and thence tracing a murderer, we yet discover this body to be that of some other individual than Marie; or, if starting from the living Marie, we find her, yet find her unassassinated—in either case we lose our labour; since it Monsieur G- with whom we have to deal. For our own purpose, therefore, if not for the purpose of justice, it is indispensable that our first step should be the determination of the identity of the corpse with the Marie Rogêt who is missing.

^{*} See "Murders in the Rue Morgue.

"With the public the arguments of L'Etoile have had weight; and that the journal itself is convinced of their importance would appear from the manner in which it commences one of its essays upon the subject. 'Several of the morning papers of the day,' it says, 'speak of the conclusive article in Monday's Etoile.' To me, this article appears conclusive of little beyond the zeal of its inditer. We should bear in mind that, in general, it is the object of our newspapers rather to create a sensation, to make a point, than to further the cause of truth. The latter end is only pursued when it seems coincident with the former The print which merely falls in with ordinary opinion (however well founded this opinion may be) earns for itself no credit with the mob. The mass of the people regard as profound only him who suggests pungent contradictions of the general idea. In ratiocination, not less than in literature, it is the epigram which is the most immediately and the most universally appreciated. In both, it is of the lowest order of merit.

"What I mean to say is, that it is the mingled epigram and melodrame of the idea, that Marie Rogêt still lives, rather than any true plausibility in this idea, which have suggested it to L'Etoile, and secured it a favourable reception with the public. Let us examine the heads of this journal's argument; endeavouring to avoid the incoherence with which it is originally set forth

"The first aim of the writer is to show, from the brevity of the interval between Marie's disappearance and the finding of the floating corpse, that this corpse cannot be that of Marie. The reduction of this interval to its smallest possible dimension, becomes thus, at once, an object with the reasoner. In the rash pursuit of this object he rushes into mere assumption at the outset. It is folly to suppose,' he says, 'that the murder, if murder was committed on her body, could have been consummated soon enough to have enabled her mur

derers to throw the body into the river before midnight. We demand at once, and very naturally, why? Why is it folly to suppose that the murder was committed within five minutes after the girl's quitting her mother's house? Why is it folly to suppose that the murder was committed at any given period of the day? There have been assassinations at all hours. But, had the murder taken place at any moment between nine o'clock in the morning of Sunday, and a quarter before midnight, there would still have been time enough 'to throw the body into the river before midnight.' This assumption, then, amounts precisely to this, that the murder was not committed on Sunday at all; and, if we allow L'Etoile to assume this, we may permit it any liberties whatever. The paragraph beginning 'It is folly to suppose that the murder,' &c., however it appears as printed in L'Etoile, may be imagined to have existed actually thus in the brain of its inditer: 'It is folly to suppose that the murder, if murder was committed on the body, could have been committed soon enough to have enabled her murderers to throw the body into the river before midnight; it is folly, we say, to suppose all this, and to suppose at the same time (as we are resolved to suppose) that the body was not thrown in until after midnight'a sentence sufficiently inconsequential in itself, but not

so utterly preposterous as the one printed.

"Were it my purpose," continued Dupin, "merely to make out a case against this passage of L'Etoile's argument, I might safely leave it where it is. It is not, however, with L'Etoile that we have to do, but with the truth. The sentence in question has but one meaning as it stands, and this meaning I have fairly stated; but it is material that we go behind the mere words for an idea which these words were obviously intended, and failed, to convey. It was the design of the journalist to say that, at whatever period of the day or night of Sunday this murder was committed, it was improbable that the assassins would have ventured to bear the corpse to

the river before midnight. And herein lies really the assumption of which I complain. It is assumed that the murder was committed at such a position, and under such circumstances, that the bearing it to the river became necessary. Now the assassination might have taken place upon the river's brink or on the river itself; and thus the throwing the corpse in the water might have been resorted to at any period of the day or night, as the most obvious and most immediate mode of disposal. You will understand that I suggest nothing here as probable, or as coincident with my own opinion. My design, so far, has no reference to the facts of the case; I wish merely to caution you against the whole tone of L'Etoile's suggestion by calling your attention to its exparte character at the outset.

"Having prescribed thus a limit to suit its own preconceived notions, having assumed that if this were the body of Marie, it could have been in the water but a very brief time, the journal goes on to say:

"'All experience has shown that drowned bodies, or bodies thrown into the water immediately after death by violence, require from six to ten days for sufficient decomposition to take place to bring them to the top of the water. Even when a cannon is fired over a corpse, and it rises before at least five or six days' immersion, it sinks again if let alone.'

"These assertions have been tacitly received by every paper in Paris with the exception of Le Moniteur. This latter print endeavours to combat that portion of the paragraph which has reference to 'drowned bodies' only, by citing some five or six instances in which the bodies of individuals known to be drowned were found floating after the lapse of less time than is insisted upon by L'Etoile. But there is something excessively unphilosophical in the attempt on the part of Le Moniteur to rebut the general assertion of L'Etoile by a citation of particular instances militating against that assertion. Had it been possible to adduce fifty instead of five examples of bodies found floating at the end of two or three days, these fifty examples could still have been properly regarded only as exceptions to L'Etoile's rule

until such time as the rule itself should be confuted. Admitting the rule (and this Le Moniteur does not deny, insisting merely upon its exceptions), the argument of L'Etoile is suffered to remain in full force; for this argument does not pretend to involve more than a question of the probability of the body having risen to the surface in less than three days; and this probability will be in favour of L'Etoile's position until the instances so child-ishly adduced shall be sufficient in number to establish

an antagonistical rule.

"You will see at once that all argument upon this head should be urged, if at all, against the rule itself; and for this end we must examine the rationale of the rule. Now the human body in general is neither much lighter nor much heavier than the water of the Seine; that is to say, the specific gravity of the human body in its natural condition is about equal to the bulk of fresh water which it displaces. The bodies of fat and fleshy persons, with small bones, and of women generally, are lighter than those of the lean and large-boned, and of men; and the specific gravity of the water of a river is somewhat influenced by the presence of the tide from sea. But, leaving this tide out of question, it may be said that very few human bodies will sink at all, even in fresh water, of their own accord. Almost any one, falling into a river, will be enabled to float, if he suffer the specific gravity of the water fairly to be adduced in comparison with his own, that is to say, if he suffer his whole person to be immersed, with as little exception as possible. The proper position for one who cannot swim is the upright position of the walker on land, with the head thrown fully back and immersed, the mouth and nostrils alone remaining above the surface. Thus circumstanced, we shall find that we float without difficulty and without exertion. It is evident, however, that the gravities of the body and of the bulk of water displaced are very nicely balanced, and that a trifle will cause either to preponderate. An arm, for instance, uplifted from the

water, and thus deprived of its support, is an additional weights ufficient to immerse the whole head, while the accidental aid of the smallest piece of timber will enable us to elevate the head so as to look about. Now, in the struggles of one unused to swimming, the arms are invariably thrown upwards, while an attempt is made to keep the head in its usual perpendicular position. The result is the immersion of the mouth and nostrils, and the inception, during efforts to breathe while beneath the surface, of water into the lungs. Much is also received into the stomach, and the whole body becomes heavier by the difference between the weight of the air originally distending these cavities and that of the fluid which now fills them. This difference is sufficient to cause the body to sink, as a general rule, but is insufficient in the cases of individuals with small bones and an abnormal quantity of flaccid or fatty matter. Such individuals float even after drowning.

"The corpse, being supposed at the bottom of the river, will there remain until, by some means, its specific gravity again becomes less than that of the bulk of water which it displaces. This effect is brought about by decomposition or otherwise. The result of decomposition is the generation of gas, distending the cellular tissues and all the cavities, and giving the puffed appearance which is so herrible. When this distension has so far progressed that the bulk of the corpse is materially increased without a corresponding increase of mass or weight, its specific gravity becomes less than that of the water displaced, and it forthwith makes its appearance at the surface. But decomposition is modified by innumerable circumstances, is hastened or retarded by innumerable agencies; for example, by the heat or cold of the season, by the mineral impregnation or purity of the water, by its depth or shallowness, by its currency or stagnation, by the temperament of the body, by its infection or freedom from disease before death. Thus it is evident that we can assign no period, with anything

like accuracy, at which the corpse shall rise through decomposition. Under certain conditions this result would be brought about within an hour; under others, it might not take place at all. There are chemical infusions by which the animal frame can be preserved for ever from corruption—the bi-chloride of mercury is one. But, apart from decomposition, there may be, and very usually is, a generation of gas within the stomach, from the acetous fermentation of vegetable matter (or within other cavities from other causes), sufficient to induce a distension which will bring the body to the surface. The effect produced by the firing of a cannon is that of simple vibration. This may either loosen the corpse from the soft mud or ooze in which it is embedded, thus permitting it to rise when other agencies have already prepared it for so doing, or it may overcome the tenacity of some putrescent portions of the cellular tissue, allowing the cavities to distend under the influence of the gas.

"Having thus before us the whole philosophy of this subject, we can easily test by it the assertions of L'Etoile.
'All experience shows,' says this paper, 'that drowned bodies, or bodies thrown into the water immediately after death by violence, require from six to ten days for sufficient decomposition to take place to bring them to the top of the water. Even when a cannon is fired over a corpse, and it rises before at least five or six days'

immersion, it sinks again if let alone.'

"The whole of this paragraph must now appear a tissue of inconsequence and incoherence. All experience does not show that 'drowned bodies' require from six to ten days for sufficient decomposition to take place to bring them to the surface. Both science and experience show that the period of their rising is, and necessarily must be, indeterminate. If, moreover, a body has risen to the surface through firing of cannon, it will not 'sink again if let alone,' until decomposition has so far progressed as to permit the escape of the generated gas. But I wish to call your attention to the distinction which

is made between 'drowned bodies' and 'bodies thrown into the water immediately after death by violence.' Although the writer admits the distinction, he yet includes them all in the same category. I have shown how it is that the body of a drowning man becomes specifically heavier than its bulk of water, and that he would not sink at all except for the struggles by which he elevates his arms above the surface, and his gasps for breath while beneath the surface—gasps which supply by water the place of the original air in the lungs. But these struggles and these gasps would not occur in the body 'thrown into the water immediately after death by violence.' Thus, in the latter instance, the body, as a general rule, would not sink at all; a fact of which L'Etoile is evidently ignorant. When decomposition had proceeded to a very great extent, when the flesh had in a great measure left the bones, then, indeed, but not till then, should we lose sight of the corpse.

"And now what are we to make of the argument, that the body found could not be that of Marie Rogêt, because, three days only having elapsed, this body was found floating? If drowned, being a woman, she might never have sunk; or, having sunk, might have reappeared in twenty four hours, or less. But no one supposes her to have been drowned; and, dying before being thrown into the river, she might have been found

floating at any period afterwards whatever.

"But,' says L'Etoile, 'if the body had been kept in its mangled state on shore until Tuesday night, some trace would be found on shore of the murderers.' Here it is at first difficult to perceive the intention of the reasoner. He means to anticipate what he imagines would be an objection to his theory, viz., that the body was kept on shore two days, suffering rapid decomposition; more rapid than if immersed in water. He supposes that, had this been the case, it might have appeared at the surface on the Wednesday, and thinks that only under such circumstances it could so have appeared. He

is accordingly in haste to show that it was not kept on shore; for, if so, 'some trace would be found on shore of the murderers.' I presume you smile at the sequitur. You cannot be made to see how the mere duration of the corpse on the shore could operate to multiply traces of the assassins. Nor can I.

"'And furthermore it is exceedingly improbable," continues our journal, 'that any villains who had committed such a murder as is here supposed, would have thrown the body in without weight to sink it, when such a precaution could have so easily been taken.' Observe here the laughable confusion of thought! No one, not even L'Etoile, disputes the murder committed on the body found. The marks of violence are too obvious. It is our reasoner's object merely to show that this body is not Marie's. He wishes to prove that Marie is not assassinated, not that the corpse was not. Yet his observation proves only the latter point. Here is a corpse without weight attached; murderers casting it in would not have failed to attach a weight; therefore it was not thrown in by murderers. This is all which is proved, it anything is. The question of identity is not even approached, and L'Etoile has been at great pains merely to gainsay now what it has admitted only a moment before. 'We are perfectly convinced,' it says, 'that the body found was that of a murdered female.'

"Nor is this the sole instance, even in this division of the subject, where our reasoner unwittingly reasons against himself. His evident object, I have already said, is to reduce, as much as possible, the interval between Marie's disappearance and the finding of the corpse. Yet we find him urging the point that no person saw the girl from the moment of her leaving her mother's house. 'We have no evidence,' he says, 'that Marie Rogêt was in the land of the living after nine o'clock on Sunday, June the twenty-second.' As his argument is obviously an ex-parte one, he should, at least, have left this matter out of sight; for had any one

been known to see Marie, say on Monday, or on Tuesday, the interval in question would have been much reduced, and, by his own ratiocination, the probability much diminished of the corpse being that of the grisette. It is nevertheless amusing to observe that L'Etoile insists upon its point in the full belief of its furthering its general argument.

"Re-peruse now that portion of this argument which has reference to the identification of the corpse by Beauvais. In regard to the hair upon the arm, L'Etoile has been disingenuous. M. Beauvais, not being an idiot, could never have urged, in identification of the corpse, simply hair upon its arm. No arm is without hair. The generality of the expression of L'Etoile is a mere perversion of the witness's phraseology. He must have spoken of some peculiarity in this hair. It must have been a peculiarity of colour, of quantity, of length, or of situation.

"' Her foot,' says the journal, 'was small; so are thousands of feet. Her garter is no proof whatever; nor is her shoe, for shoes and garters are sold in packages. The same may be said of the flowers in her hat. One thing upon which M. Beauvais strongly insists is, that the clasp on the garter found had been set back to take it in. This amounts to nothing; for most women find it proper to take a pair of garters home and fit them to the size of the limbs they are to encircle, rather than to try them in the store where they purchase.' Here it is difficult to suppose the reasoner in earnest. Had M. Beauvais, in his search for the body of Marie, discovered a corpse corresponding in general size and appearance to the missing girl, he would have been warranted (with out reference to the question of habiliment at all) in forming an opinion that his search had been successful. If, in addition to the point of general size and contour, he had found upon the arm a peculiar hairy appearance which he had observed upon the living Marie, his opinion might have been justly strengthened; and the increase

of positiveness might well have been in the ratio of the peculiarity or unusualness of the hairy mark. If, the feet of Marie being small, those of the corpse were also small, the increase of probability that the body was that of Marie would not be an increase in a ratio merely arithmetical, but in one highly geometrical, or accumulative. Add to all this shoes such as she had been known to wear upon the day of her disappearance, and, although these shoes may be 'sold in packages,' you so far augment the probability as to verge upon the certain. What, of itself, would be no evidence of identity, becomes through its corroborative position proof most sure. Give us, then, flowers in the hat corresponding to those worn by the missing girl, and we seek for nothing farther. If only one flower, we seek for nothing farther; what then if two or three, or more? Each successive one is multiple evidence; proof not added to proof, but multiplied by hundreds or thousands. Let us now discover upon the deceased garters such as the living used, and it is almost folly to proceed. But these garters are found to be tightened by the setting back of a clasp, in just such a manner as her own had been tightened by Marie, shortly previous to her leaving home. It is now madness or hypocrisy to doubt. What L'Etoile says in respect to this abbreviation of the garters being an usual occur-rence, shows nothing beyond its own pertinacity in error. The elastic nature of the clasp-garter is self-demonstra-tion of the unusualness of the abbreviation. What is made to adjust itself must of necessity require foreign adjustment but rarely. It must have been by an accident, in its strictest sense, that these garters of Marie needed the tightening described. They alone would have amply established her identity. But it is not that the corpse was found to have the garters of the missing girl, or found to have her shoes, or her bonnet, or the flowers of her bonnet, or her feet, or a peculiar mark upon the arm, or her general size and appearance; it is that the corpse had each and all collective y. Could it

be proved that the editor of L'Etoile really entertained a doubt, under the cirumstances, there would be no need. in his case, of a commission de lunatico inquirendo. He has thought it sagacious to echo the small-talk of the lawyers, who, for the most part, content themselves with echoing the rectangular precepts of the courts. I would here observe that very much of what is rejected as evidence by a court is the best of evidence to the intellect. For the court, guiding itself by the general principles of evidence - the recognised and booked principles - is averse from swerving at particular instances. And this stedfast adherence to principle, with rigorous disregard of the conflicting exception, is a sure mode of attaining the maximum of attainable truth, in any long sequence of time. The practice, in mass, is therefore philosophical; but it is not the less certain that it engenders vast individual error.*

"In respect to the insinuations levelled at Beauvais, you will be willing to dismiss them in a breath. You have already fathomed the true character of this good gentleman. He is a busybody, with much of romance and little of wit. Anyone so constituted will readily so conduct himself, upon occasion of real excitement, as to render himself liable to suspicion on the part of the overacute or the ill-disposed. M. Beauvais (as it appears from your notes) had some personal interviews with the editor of L'Etoile, and offended him by venturing an opinion that the corpse, notwithstanding the theory of the editor, was, in sober fact, that of Marie. 'He persists,' says the paper, 'in asserting the corpse to be that of Marie, but cannot give a circumstance, in addition to those which we have commented upon, to make others

[&]quot;A theory based on the qualities of an object will prevent its being unfolded according to its objects; and he who arranges topics in reference to their causes will cease to value them according to their results. Thus the jurisprudence of every nation will show that, when law becomes a science and a system, it ceases to be justice. The errors into which a blind devotion to principles of classification has led the common-law will be seen by observing how often the Legislature has been obliged to come forward to restore the equity its scheme had lost."—Landor.

believe.' Now, without re-adverting to the fact that stronger evidence, 'to make others believe,' could never have been adduced, it may be remarked that a man may very well be understood to believe, in a case of this kind, without the ability to advance a single reason for the belief of a second party. Nothing is more vague than impressions of individual identity. Each man recognises his neighbour, yet there are few instances in which anyone is prepared to give a reason for his recognition. The editor of L'Etoile had no right to be offended at M. Beauvais' unreasoning belief.

"The suspicious circumstances which invest him will be found to tally much better with my hypothesis of romantic busybodyism than with the reasoner's suggestion of guilt. Once adopting the more charitable interpretation, we shall find no difficulty in comprehending the rose in the key-hole; the 'Marie' upon the slate; the 'elbowing the male relatives out of the way;' the 'aversion to permitting them to see the body;' the caution given to Madame B-, that she must hold no conversation with the gendarme until his return (Beauvais'); and, lastly, his apparent determination 'that nobody should have anything to do with the proceedings except himself.' It seems to me unquestionable that Beauvais was a suitor of Marie's; that she coquetted with him; and that he was ambitious of being thought to enjoy her fullest intimacy and confidence. I shall say nothing more upon this point; and, as the evidence fully rebuts the assertion of L'Etoile, touching the matter of apathy on the part of the mother and other relatives—an apathy inconsistent with the supposition of their believing the corpse to be that of the perfumery-girl-we shall now proceed as if the question of identity were settled to our perfect satisfaction."

"And what," I here demanded, "do you think of

the opinions of Le Commerciel?"

"That, in spirit, they are far more worthy of attention than any which have been promulgated upon the subject, The deductions from the premises are philosophical and acute; but the premises, in two instances, at least, are founded in imperfect observation. Le Commerciel wishes to intimate that Marie was seized by some gang of low ruffians not far from her mother's door. 'It is impossible,' it urges, 'that a person so well known to thousands as this young woman was should have passed three blocks without some one having seen her.' This is the idea of a man long resident in Paris—a public man and one whose walks to and fro in the city have been mostly limited to the vicinity of the public offices. He is aware that he seldom passes so far as a dozen blocks from his own bureau without being recognised and accosted. And, knowing the extent of his personal acquaintance with others, and of others with him, he compares his notoriety with that of the perfumery-girl, finds no great difference between them, and reaches at once the conclusion that she, in her walks, would be equally liable to recognition with himself in his. This could only be the case were her walks of the same unvarying methodical character, and within the same species of limited region as are his own. He passes to and fro, at regular in tervals, within a confined periphery, abounding in individuals who are led to observation of his person through interest in the kindred nature of his occupation with their own. But the walks of Marie may, in general, be supposed discursive. In this particular instance, it will be understood as most probable that she proceeded upon a route of more than average diversity from her accustomed ones. The parallel which we imagine to have existed in the mind of Le Commerciel would only be sustained in the event of the two individuals traversing the whole city. In this case, granting the personal acquaint ances to be equal, the chances would be also equal that an equal number of personal rencounters would be made. For my own part, I should hold it not only as possible, but as very far more than probable, that Marie might have proceeded, at any given period, by any one of the many

without meeting a single individual whom she knew or by whom she was known. In viewing this question in its full and proper light, we must hold steadily in mind the great disproportion between the personal acquaintances of even the most noted individual in Paris and the

entire population of Paris itself.

"But whatever force there may still appear to be in the suggestion of Le Commerciel will be much diminished when we take into consideration the hour at which the girl went abroad. 'It was when the streets were full of people,' says Le Commerciel, 'that she went out.' But not so. It was at nine o'clock in the morning. Now at nine o'clock of every morning in the week, with the exception of Sunday, the streets of the city are. it is true, thronged with people. At nine on Sunday the populace are chiefly within doors, preparing for church. No observing person can have failed to notice the peculiarly deserted air of the town from about eight until ten on the morning of every Sabbath. Between ten and eleven the streets are thronged, but not at so early a period as that designated.

"There is another point at which there seems a deficiency of observation on the part of Le Commerciel.

'A piece,' it says, 'of one of the unfortunate girl's petticoats, two feet long and one foot wide, was torn out and tied under her chin, and around the back of her head, probably to prevent screams. This was done by fellows who had no pocket handkerchiefs.' Whether this idea is or is not well founded, we will endeavour to see hereafter; but by 'fellows who have no pocket-handkerchiefs,' the editor intends the lowest class of ruffians. These, however, are the very descriptions of people who will always be found to have handkerchiefs even when destitute of shirts. You must have had occasion to observe how absolutely indispensable, of late years, to the thorough blackguard has become the pocket-hand-

kerchief"

"And what are we to think," I asked, "of the article in Le Soilel?"

"That it is a vast pity its inditer was not born a parrot; in which case he would have been the most illustrious parrot of his race. He has merely repeated the individual items of the already published opinion; collecting them, with a laudable industry, from this paper and from that. 'The things had all evidently been there,' he says, 'at least three or four weeks; and there can be no doubt that the spot of this appalling outrage has been discovered.' The facts here re-stated by Le Soliel are very far from removing my own doubts upon this subject, and we will examine them more particularly hereafter in connexion with another division of the theme

"At present we must occupy ourselves with other investigations. You cannot fail to have remarked the extreme laxity of the examination of the corpse. To be sure, the question of identity was readily determined, or should have been; but there were other points to be ascertained. Had the body been in any respect despoiled? Had the deceased any articles of jewellery about her person upon leaving home? if so, had she any when found? These are important questions utterly untouched by the evidence; and there are others of equal moment which have met with no attention. We must endeavour to satisfy ourselves by personal inquiry. The case of St. Eustache must be re-examined. I have no suspicion of this person; but let us proceed methodically, We will ascertain beyond a doubt the validity of the affidavits in regard to his whereabouts on the Sunday. Affidavits of this character are readily made matter of mystification. Should there be nothing wrong here, however, we will dismiss St. Eustache from our investigations. His suicide, however corroborative of suspicion, were there found to be deceit in the affidavits, is, without such deceit, in no respect an unaccountable circumstance, or one which need cause us to deflect from the line of ordinary analysis.

"In that which I now propose we will discard the interior points of this tragedy, and concentrate our atten-tion upon its outskirts. Not the least usual error, in investigations such as this, is the limiting of inquiry to the immediate, with total disregard of the collateral or circumstantial events. It is the malpractice of the courts to confine evidence and discussion to the bounds of apparent relevancy. Yet experience has shown, and a true philosophy will always show, that a vast, perhaps the larger portion of truth, arises from the seemingly irrelevant. It is through the spirit of this principle, if not precisely through its letter, that modern science has resolved to calculate upon the unforeseen. But, perhaps, you do not comprehend me. The history of human knowledge has so uninterruptedly shown that to collateral, or incidental, or accidental events, we are indebted for the most numerous and most valuable discoveries, that it has at length become necessary, in any prospective view of improvement, to make not only large but the largest allowances for inventions that shall arise by chance, and quite out of the range of ordinary expectation. It is no longer philosophical to base, upon what has been, a vision of what is to be. Accident is admitted as a portion of the substructure. We make chance a matter of absolute calculation. We subject the unlooked-for and unimagined to the mathematical formula of the schools.

"I repeat that it is no more than fact that the larger portion of all truth has sprung from the collateral; and it is but in accordance with the spirit of the principle involved in this fact, that I would divert inquiry, in the present case, from the trodden and hitherto unfruitful ground of the event itself, to the contemporary circumstances which surround it. While you ascertain the validity of the affidavits, I will examine the newspapers more generally than you have as yet done. So far, we have only reconnoitred the field of investigation; but it will be strange indeed if a comprehensive survey, such

as I propose, of the public prints, will not afford us some minute points which shall establish a direction for in

quiry."

In pursuance of Dupin's suggestion, I made scrupulous examination of the affair of the affidavits. The result was a firm conviction of their validity, and of the consequent innocence of St. Eustache. In the meantime, my friend occupied himself with what seemed to me a minuteness altogether objectless in a scrutiny of the various newspaper-files. At the end of a week he placed before me the following extracts:

"About three years and a half ago a disturbance, very similar to the present, was caused by the disappearance of this same. Marie Rogêt from the parfumeric of Monsieur Le Blanc, in the Palais Royal. At the end of a week, however, she re-appeared at her customary comptoir as well as ever, with the exception of a slight paleness not altogether usual. It was given out by Monsieur Le Blanc and her mother that she had merely been on a visit to some friend in the country; and the affair was speedily hushed up. We presume that the present absence is a freak of the same nature, and that at the expiration of a week, or perhaps a month, we shall have her among us again."—Evening Paper, Monday, June 23.

among us again."—Evening Paper, Monday, June 23.

"An evening journal of yesterday refers to a former mysterious disappearance of Mademoiselle Rogêt. It is well known that, during the week of her absence from Le Blane's parfumerie, she was in the company of a young naval officer, much noted for his debaucheries. A quarrel, it is supposed, providentially led to her return home. We have the name of the Lothario in question, who is at present stationed in Paris, but, for obvious reasons, forbear to make it public."—Le Mercurie, Tuesday morn

ing, June 24.

"An outrage of the most atrocious character was perpetrated near this city the day before yesterday. A gendeman, with his wife and daughter, engaged, after dusk, the services of six young men, who were idly rowing a boat to and fro near the banks of the Seine, to convey him across the river. Upon reaching the opposite shore the three passengers stepped out, and had proceeded so far as to be beyond the view of the boat, when the daughter discovered that she had left in it her parasol. She returned for it, was seized by the gang, carried out into the stream, gagged, brutally treated, and finally taken to the shore at a point not far from that at which she had originally entered the boat with her parents. The villains have escaped for the time, but the police are upon their trail, and some of them will soon be taken."—Morning Paper, June 25.

"We have received one or two communications, the object of which is to fasten the crime of the late atrocity upon Mennais;* but as this gentleman has been fully exonerated by a legal inquiry, and as the arguments of our several correspondents appear to be more zealous than profound, we do not think it advisable to make them public."—Morning Paper,

June 28.

"We have received several forcibly-written communications, apparently from various sources, and which go far to render it a matter of cer-

[•] Mennais was one of the parties originally suspected and arrested, but discharged through total lack of evidence.

tainty that the unfortunate Marie Roget has become a victim of one of the numerous bands of blackguards which infest the vicinity of the city upon Sunday. Our own opinion is decidedly in favour of this supposition. We shall endeavour to make room for some of these arguments hereafter.'
-Evening Paper, Tuesday, June 31.

"On Monday one of the bargemen connected with the revenue-service saw an empty boat floating down the Seine. Sails were lying in the bottom of the boat. The bargeman towed it under the barge-office. The next morning it was taken from thence without the knowledge of any of the officers. The rudder is now at the barge-office."—Le Diligence, Thursday, June 26.

Upon reading these various extracts, they not only seemed to me irrelevant, but I could perceive no mode in which any of them could be brought to bear upon the matter in hand. I waited for some explanation from

Dupin.

"It is not my present design," he said, "to dwell upon the first and second of these extracts. I have copied them chiefly to show you the extreme remissness of the police, who, as far as I can understand from the Prefect, have not troubled themselves in any respect with the examination of the naval officer alluded to. Yet it is mere folly to say that between the first and second disappearance of Marie there is no supposable connexion. Let us admit the first elopement to have resulted in a quarrel between the lovers, and the return home of the betrayed. We are now prepared to view a second elope ment (if we know that an elopement has again taken place) as indicating a renewal of the betrayer's advances, rather than as the result of new proposals by a second individual; we are prepared to regard it as a 'making up' of the old amour rather than as the commen ement of a new one. The changes are ten to one that he who had once eloped with Marie would again propose an elopement, rather than that she to whom proposals or elopement had been made by one individual should have them made to her by another. And here let me call your attention to the fact, that the time elapsing between the first ascertained and the second supposed elopement is a few months more than the general period of the cruises of our men-of-war. Had the lover been interrupted in

his first villany by the necessity of departure to sea, and had he seized the first moment of his return to renew the base designs not yet altogether accomplished, or not yet altogether accomplished by him? Of all these

things we know nothing.

"You will say, however, that in the second instance there was no elopement, as imagined. Certainly not; but are we prepared to say that there was not the frustrated design? Beyond St. Eustache, and perhaps Beauvais, we find no recognised, no open, no honourable suitors of Marie. Of none other is there anything said. Who, then, is the secret lover of whom the relatives (at least most of them) know nothing, but whom Marie meets upon the morning of Sunday, and who is so deeply in her confidence that she hesitates not to remain with him, until the shades of the evening descend, amid the solitary groves of the Barrière du Roule? Who is that secret lover, I ask, of whom, at least, most of the relatives know nothing? And what means the singular prophecy of Madame Rogêt on the morning of Marie's departure. 'I fear that I shall never see Marie again?'

"But if we cannot imagine Madame Rogêt privy to the design of elopement, may we not at least suppose this design entertained by the girl? Upon quitting home, she gave it to be understood that she was about to visit her aunt in the Rue des Drômes, and St. Eustache was requested to call for her at dark. Now, at first glance, this fact strongly militates against my suggestion; but let us reflect. That she did meet some companion, and proceed with him across the river, reaching the Barrière du Roule at so late an hour as three o'clock in the afternoon, is known. But in consenting so to accompany this individual (for whatever purpose, to her mother known or unknown), she must have thought of her expressed intention when leaving home, and of the surprise and suspicion aroused in the bosom of her affianced suitor, St. Eustache, when, calling for her at the hour appointed, in the Rue des Drômes, he should find that she had not

been there; and when, moreover, upon returning to the pension with this alarming intelligence, he should become aware of her continued absence from home. She must have thought of these things, I say. She must have foreseen the chagrin of St. Eustache, the suspicion of all. She could not have thought of returning to brave his suspicion; but the suspicion becomes a point of trivial importance to her, if we suppose her not intending to return.

"We may imagine her thinking thus-'I am to meet a certain person for the purpose of elopement, or for certain other purposes known only to myself. It is necessary that there be no chance of interruption; there must be sufficient time given us to elude pursuit; I will give it to be understood that I shall visit and spend the day with my aunt at the Rue des Drômes; I will tell St. Eustache not to call for me until dark. In this way, my absence from home for the longest possible period, without causing suspicion or anxiety, will be accounted for, and I shall gain more time than in any other manner. If I bid St. Eustache call for me at dark, he will be sure not to call before; but, if I wholly neglect to bid him call, my time for escape will be diminished, since it will be expected that I return the earlier, and my absence will the sooner excite anxiety. Now, if it were my design to return at all—if I had in contemplation merely a stroll with the individual in question—it would not be my policy to bid St. Eustache call; for calling, he will be sure to ascertain that I have played him false, a fact of which I might keep him for ever in ignorance, by leaving home without notifying him of my intention, by returning before dark, and by then stating that I had been to visit my aunt in the Rue des Drômes. But, as it is my design never to return, or not for some weeks, or not until certain concealments are effected, the gaining of time is the only point about which I need give myself any concern.'

"You have observed, in your notes, that the most

general opinion in relation to this sad affair is, and was from the first, that the girl had been the victim of a gang of blackguards. Now, the popular opinion, under certain conditions, is not to be disregarded. When arising of itself, when manifesting itself in a strictly spontaneous manner, we should look upon it as analogous with that intuition which is the idiosyncrasy of the individual man of genius. In ninety-nine cases from the hundred I would abide by its decision. But it is important that we find no palpable traces of suggestion. The opinion must be rigorously the public's own; and the distinction is often exceedingly difficult to perceive and to maintain. In the present instance, it appears to me that this 'public opinion,' in respect to a gang, has been superinduced by the collateral event which is detailed in the third of my extracts. All Paris is excited by the discovered corpse of Marie, a girl young, beautiful and notorious. This corpse is found, bearing marks of violence, and floating in the river. But it is now made known that, at the very period, or about the very period, in which it is supposed that the girl was assassinated, an outrage similar in nature to that endured by the deceased, although less in extent, was perpetrated by a gang of young ruffians upon the person of a second young female. Is it wonderful that the one known atrocity should influence the popular judgment in regard to the other unknown? This judgment awaited direction, and the known outrage seemed so opportunely to afford it! Marie, too, was found in the river; and upon this very river was this known out-rage committed. The connexion of the two events had about it so much of the palpable, that the true wonder would have been a failure of the populace to appreciate and to seize it. But, in fact, the one atrocity, known to be so committed, is, if anything, evidence that the other, committed at a time nearly coincident, was not so committed. It would have been a miracle indeed if, while a gang of ruffians were perpetrating, at a given

locality, a most unheard-of wrong, there should have been another similar gang, in a similar locality, in the same city, under the same circumstances, with the same means and appliances, engaged in a wrong of precisely the same aspect, at precisely the same period of time! Yet in what, if not in this marvellous train of coincidence, does the accidentally suggested opinion of the populace call upon us to believe?

"Before proceeding further, let us consider the supposed scene of the assassination, in the thicket at the Barrière du Roule. This thicket, although dense, was in the close vicinity of a public road. Within were three or four large stones, forming a kind of seat with a back and footstool. On the upper stone was discovered a white petticoat; on the second a silk scarf. A parasol, gloves and a pocket-handkerchief, were also here found. The handkerchief bore the name, 'Marie Rogêt.' Fragments of dress were seen on the branches around. The earth was trampled, the bushes were broken, and there

was every evidence of a violent struggle.

"Notwithstanding the acclamation with which the discovery of this thicket was received by the press, and the unanimity with which it was supposed to indicate the precise scene of the outrage, it must be admitted that there was some very good reason for doubt. That it was the scene, I may or I may not believe; but there was excellent reason for doubt. Had the true scene been, as Le Commerciel suggested, in the neighbourhood of the Rue Pavée St. Andrée, the perpetrators of the crime, supposing them still resident in Paris, would naturally have been stricken with terror at the public attention thus acutely directed into the proper channel; and, in certain classes of minds, there would have arisen, at once, a sense of the necessity of some exertion to re-divert this attention. And thus, the thicket of the Barrière du Roule having been already suspected, the idea of placing the articles where they were found might have been naturally entertained. There is no real evi

dence, although Le Soleil so supposes, that the articles discovered had been more than a very few days in the thicket; while there is much circumstantial proof that they could not have remained there without attracting attention during the twenty days elapsing between the fatal Sunday and the afternoon upon which they were found by the boys. 'They were all mildewed down hard,' says Le Soleil, adopting the opinions of its predecessors, 'with the action of the rain, and stuck together from mildew. The grass had grown around and over some of them. The silk of the parasol was strong, but the threads of it were run together within. The upper part, where it had been doubled and folded, was all mildewed and rotten, and tore on being opened.' In respect to the grass having 'grown around and over some of them,' it is obvious that the fact could only have been ascertained from the words, and thus from the recollections, of two small boys; for these boys removed the articles and took them home before they had been seen by a third party. But grass will grow, especially in warm and damp weather (such as was that of the period of the murder), as much as two or three inches in a single day. A parasol lying upon a newly-turfed ground might, in a single week, be entirely concealed from sight by the upspringing grass. And touching that mildew upon which the editor of Le Soleil so pertinaciously insists that he employs the word no less than three times in the brief paragraph just quoted, is he really unaware of the nature of this mildew? Is he to be told that it is one of the many classes of fungus of which the most ordinary feature is its upspringing and decadence within twentyfour hours?

"Thus we see, at a glance, that what has been most triumphantly adduced in support of the idea that the articles had been 'for at least three or four weeks' in the thicket, is most absurdly null as regards any evidence of that fact. On the other hand, it is exceedingly difficult to believe that these articles could have remained in the thicket specified, for a longer period than a single week-for a longer period than from one Sunday to the next. Those who know anything of the vicinity of Paris, know the extreme difficulty of finding seclusion, unless at a great distance from its suburbs. Such a thing as an unexplored, or even an unfrequently visited recess, amid its woods or groves, is not for a moment to be imagined. Let any one who, being at heart a lover of nature, is yet chained by duty to the dust and heat of this great metropolis—let any such one attempt, even during the week-days, to slake his thirst for solitude amid the scenes of natural loveliness which immediately surround us. At every second step he will find the growing charm dispelled by the voice and personal intrusion of some ruffian or party of carousing blackguards. He will seek privacy amid the densest foliage, all in vain. Here are the very nooks where the unwashed most abound; here are the temples most desecrated. With sickness of heart the wanderer will flee back to polluted Paris as to a less odious because less incongruous sink of pollution. But if the vicinity of the city is so beset during the working-days of the week, how much more so on the Sabbath? It is now especially that, released from the claims of labour, or deprived of the customary opportunities of crime. the town blackguard seeks the precincts of the town, not through love of the rural, which in his heart he despises, but by way of escape from the restraints and conventionalities of society. He desires less the fresh air and the green trees than the utter license of the country. Here, at the road-side inn, or beneath the foliage of the woods, he indulges, unchecked by any eye except those of his boon companions, in all the mad excess of a counterfeit hilarity—the joint offspring of liberty and of rum. I ay nothing more than what must be obvious to every dispassionate observer, when I repeat that the circumstance of the articles in question having remained undiscovered, for a longer period than from one Sunday to another, in any thicket in the immediate neighbour-hood of Paris, is to be looked upon as little less than miraculous.

"But there are not wanting other grounds for the suspicion that the articles were placed in the thicket with the view of diverting attention from the real scene of the outrage. And, first, let me direct your notice to the date of the discovery of the articles. Collate this with the date of the fifth extract made by myself from the newspapers. You will find that the discovery followed almost immediately the urgent communications sent to the evening paper. These communications, although various and apparently from various sources, tended all to the same point-viz., the directing attention to a gang as the perpetrators of the outrage, and to the neighbourhood of the Barrière du Roule as its scene. Now here, of course, the suspicion is not that, in consequence of these communications or of the public attention by them directed, the articles were found by the boys, but the suspicion might and may well have been, that the articles were not before found by the boys; for the reason that the articles had not before been in the thicket, having been deposited there only at so late a period as at the date, or shortly prior to the date, of the communications, by the guilty authors of these communications themselves.

"This thicket was a singular one—an exceedingly singular one. It was unusually dense. Within its naturally walled inclosure were three extracrdinary stones forming a seat with a back and footstool. And this thicket, so full of natural art, was in the immediate vicinity, within a few rods, of the dwelling of Madame Deluc, whose boys were in the habit of closely examining the shrubberies about them in search of the bark of the sassafras. Would it be a rash wager—a wager of one thousand to one—that a day never passed over the heads of these boys without finding at least one of them ensconced in the umbrageous hall, and enthroned upon

a wager have either never been boys themselves or have forgotten the boyish nature. I repeat, it is exceedingly hard to comprehend how the articles could have remained in this thicket undiscovered for a longer period than one or two days; and that thus there is good ground for suspicion, in spite of the dogmatic ignorance of Le Soleil, that they were, at a comparatively late date, deposited where found.

"But there are still other and stronger reasons for believing them so deposited than any I have as yet urged. And now let me beg your notice to the highly artificial arrangement of the articles. On the upper stone lay a white petticoat; on the second a silk scarf; scattered around were a parasol, gloves, and a pocket-handkerchief bearing the name of 'Marie Rogêt.' Here is just such an arrangement as would naturally be made by a not overacute person wishing to dispose of the articles naturally. But it is by no means a really natural arrangement. I should rather have looked to see the things all lying on the ground and trampled under-foot. In the narrow limits of that bower it would have been scarcely possible that the petticoat and scarf should have retained a position upon the stones, when subjected to the brushing to and fro of many struggling persons. 'There was evidence,' it is said, 'of a struggle; and the earth was trampled, the bushes were broken,' but the petticoat and scarf are found deposited as if upon shelves. 'The pieces of the frock torn out by the bushes were about three inches wide and six inches long. One part was the hem of the frock and it had been mended. They cooked like strips torn off. Here, inadvertently, Le Soleil has employed an exceedingly suspicious phrase. The pieces, as described, do indeed 'look like strips torn off, but purposely and by hand. It is one of the rarest of accidents that a piece is 'torn off' from any garment, such as is now in question, by the agency of a thorn. From the very nature of such fabrics, a thorn or a nail

becoming entangled in them tears them rectangularly divides them into two longitudinal rents, at right angles with each other, and meeting at an apex where the thorn enters; but it is scarcely possible to conceive the piece 'torn off.' I never so knew it, nor did you. To tear a piece off from such fabrics two distinct forces, in different directions, will be, in almost every case, required. If there be two edges to the fabric-if, for example, it be a pocket-handkerchief-and it is desired to tear from it a slip, then, and then only, will the one force serve the purpose. But in the present case the question is of a dress, presenting but one edge. To tear a piece from the interior, where no edge is presented, could only be effected by a miracle through the agency of thorns, and no one thorn could accomplish it But even where an edge is presented two thorns will be necessary, operating, the one in two distinct directions and the other in one; and this in the supposition that the edge is unhemmed. If hemmed, the matter is nearly out of the question. We thus see the numerous and great obstacles in the way of pieces being 'torn off' through the simple agency of 'thorns,' yet we are required to believe not only that one piece but that many have been so torn. 'And one part,' too, 'was the hem of the frock!' Another piece was 'part of the skirt, not the hem;' that is to say, was torn completely out, through the agency of thorns, from the unedged interior of the dress! These, I say, are things which one may well be pardoned for disbelieving; yet, taken collectively, they may form per-haps less of reasonable ground for suspicion, than the one startling circumstance of the articles having been left in this thicket at all by any murderers who had precaution enough to think of removing the corpse. You will not have apprehended me rightly, however, if you suppose it my design to deny this thicket as the scene of the outrage. There might have been a wrong here, or, more possibly, an accident at Madame Deluc's. But, in fact, this is a point of minor importance. We are

not engaged in an attempt to discover the scene, but to produce the perpetrators of the murder. What I have adduced, notwithstanding the minuteness with which I have adduced it, has been with the view, first, to show the folly of the positive and headlong assertions of Le Soleil, but, secondly and chiefly, to bring you by the most natural route to a further contemplation of the doubt whether this assassination has, or has not been, the work of a gang.

"We will resume this question by mere allusion to the revolting details of the surgeon examined at the in quest. It is only necessary to say that his published inferences, in regard to the number of the ruffians, have been properly ridiculed as unjust and totally baseless by all the reputable anatomists of Paris. Not that the matter might not have been as inferred, but that there was no ground for the inference; was there not much for

another?

"Let us reflect now upon 'the traces of a struggle;" and let me ask what these traces have been supposed to demonstrate. A gang. But do they not rather demonstrate the absence of a gang? What struggle could have taken place—what struggle so violent and enduring as to have left its 'traces' in all directions—between a weak and defenceless girl and the gang of ruffians imagined? The silent grasp of a few rough arms and all would have been over. The victim must have been absolutely passive at their will. You will here bear in mind that the arguments urged against the thicket as the scene are applicable, in chief part, only against it as the scene of an outrage committed by more than a single individual. If we imagine but one violator, we can conceive, and thus only conceive, the struggle of so violent and so obstinate a nature as to have left the 'traces' apparent.

"And again. I have already mentioned the suspicion to be excited by the fact that the articles in question were suffered to remain at all in the thicket where

discovered. It seems almost impossible that these evidences of guilt should have been accidentally left where found. There was sufficient presence of mind (it is supposed) to remove the corpse; and yet a more positive evidence than the corpse itself (whose features might have been quickly obliterated by decay) is allowed to lie conspicuously in the scene of the outrage; I allude to the handkerchief with the name of the deceased. If this was an accident, it was not the accident of a gang. We can imagine it only the accident of an individual. Let us see. An individual has committed the murder. He is alone with the ghost of the departed. He is appalled by what lies motionless before him. The fury of his passion is over, and there is abundant room in his heart for the natural awe of the deed. His is none of that confidence which the presence of numbers inevitably inspires. He is alone with the dead. He trembles and is bewildered. Yet there is a necessity for disposing of the corpse. He bears it to the river, but leaves behind him the other evidences of guilt; for it is difficult, if not impossible, to carry all the burden at once, and it will be easy to return for what is left. But in his toilsome journey to the water his fears redouble within him. The sounds of life encompass his path. A dozen times he hears or fancies the step of an observer. Even the very lights from the city bewilder him. Yet, in time and by long and frequent pauses of deep agony, he reaches he river's brink and disposes of his ghastly charge, perhaps through the medium of a boat. But now what treasure does the world hold-what threat of vengeance could it hold out-which would have power to urge the return of that lonely murderer over that toilsome and perilous path to the thicket and its blood-chilling recollections? He returns not, let the consequences be what they may. He could not return if he would. His sole thought is immediate escape. He turns his back for ever upon those dreadful shrubberies, and flees as from the wrath to come.

"But how with a gang? Their number would have

inspired them with confidence; if, indeed, confidence is ever wanting in the breast of the arrant blackguard; and of arrant blackguards alone are the supposed gangs ever constituted. Their number, I say, would have prevented the bewildering and unreasoning terror which I have imagined to paralyze the single man Could we suppose an oversight in one, or two, or three, this oversight would have been remedied by a fourth. They would have left nothing behind them; for their number would have enabled them to carry all at once. There would have been no need of return.

"Consider now the circumstance that, in the outer garment of the corpse when found, 'a slip, about a foot wide, had been torn upwards from the bottom hem to the waist, wound three times round the waist, and secured by a sort of hitch in the back.' This was done with the obvious design of affording a handle by which to carry the body. But would any number of men have dreamed of resorting to such an expedient? To three or four, the limbs of the corpse would have afforded not only a sufficient, but the best possible hold. The device is that of a single individual; and this brings us to the fact that 'between the thicket and the river, the rails'of the fences were found taken down, and the ground bore evident traces of some heavy burden having been dragged along it!' But would a number of men have put themselves to the superfluous trouble of taking down a fence, for the purpose of dragging through it a corpse which they might have lifted over any fence in an instant? Would a number of men have so dragged a corpse at all as to have left evident traces of the dragging?

"And here we must refer to an observation of Le Commercial—an observation upon which I have already, m some measure, commented. 'A piece,' says this journal, 'of one of the unfortunate girl's petticoats was torn out and tied under her chin, and around the back of her head, probably to prevent screams. This was

done by fellows who had no pocket-handkerchiefs.'

"I have before suggested that a genuine blackguard is never without a pocket handkerchief. But it is not to this fact that I now especially advert. That it was not through want of a handkerchief for the purpose imagined by Le Commerciel that this bandage was employed, is rendered apparent by the handkerchief left in the thicket; and that the object was not 'to prevent screams' appears, also, from the bandage having been employed in preference to what would so much better have answered the purpose. But the language of the evidence speaks of the strip in question as 'found around the neck, fitting loosely, and secured with a hard knot.' These words are sufficiently vague, but differ materially from those of Le Commerciel. The slip was eighteen inches wide, and therefore, although of muslin would form a strong band when folded or rumpled longitudinally. And thus rumpled it was discovered. My inference is this. The solitary murderer having borne the corpse for some distance (whether from the thicket or elsewhere) by means of the bandage hitched around its middle, found the weight in this mode of procedure, too much for his strength. He resolved to drag the burden; the evidence goes to show that it was dragged. With this object in view, it became necessary to attach something like a rope to one of the extremities. It could be best attached about the neck, where the head would prevent its slipping off. And, now, the murderer bethought him, unquestionably, of the bandage about the loins. He would have used this, but for its volution about the corpse, the hitch which embarrassed it, and the reflection that it had not been 'torn off' from the garment. It was easier to tear a new slip from the petticoat. He tore it, made it fast about the neck, and so dragged his victim to the brink of the river. That this 'bandage,' only attainable with trouble and delay, and but imperfectly answering its purpose—that this bandage was employed at all, demonstrates that the necessity for its employment sprang

from circumstances arising at a period when the handkerchief was no longer attainable; that is to say, arising, as we have imagined, after quitting the thicket (if the thicket it was), and on the road between the thicket and the river:

"But the evidence, you will say, of Mdme. Deluc, (!) points especially to the presence of a gang, in the vicinity of the thicket, at or about the epoch of the murder. This I grant. I doubt if there were not a dozen gangs, such as described by Madame Deluc, in and about the vicinity of the Barrière du Roule at or about the period of this tragedy. But the gang which has drawn upon itself the pointed animadversion, although the somewhat tardy and very suspicious evidence, of Madame Deluc, is the only gang which is represented by that honest and scrupulous old lady as having eaten her cakes and swallowed her brandy without putting themselves to the trouble of making her payment. Et hims illa ira?

"But what is the precise evidence of Madame Deluc? 'A gang of miscreants made their appearance, behaved boisterously, ate and drank without making payment, followed in the route of the young man and girl, returned to the inn about dusk, and re-crossed the river as if in

great haste.'

"Now this 'great haste' very possibly seemed greater haste in the eves of Madame Deluc, since she dwelt lingeringly and lamentingly upon her violated cakes and ale—cakes and ale for which she might still have entertained a faint hope of compensation. Why, otherwise, since it was about dusk, should she make a point of the haste? It is no cause for wonder, surely, that even a gang of blackguards should make haste to get home when a wide river is to be crossed in small boats, when storm impends, and when night approaches.

"I say approaches; for the night had not yet arrived. It was only about dusk that the indecent haste of these 'miscreants' offended the sober eyes of Madame Deluc.

But we are told that it was upon this very evening that Madame Deluc, as well as her eldest son, 'heard the acreams of a female in the vicinity of the inn,' and in what words does Madame Deluc designate the period of the evening at which these screams were heard? 'It was soon after dark,' she says. But 'soon after dark,' is, at least, dark; and 'about dusk' is as certainly daylight. Thus it is abundantly clear that the gang quitted the Barrière du Roule prior to the screams overheard (?) by Madame Deluc. And although, in all the many reports of the evidence, the relative expressions in question are distinctly and invariably employed just as I have employed them in this conversation with yourself, no notice whatever of the gross discrepancy has as yet been taken by any of the public journals, or by any of the myrmidons of the police.

"I shall add but one to the arguments against a gang; but this one has, to my own understanding at least, a weight altogether irresistible. Under the circumstances of large reward offered, and full pardon to any king's evidence, it is not to be imagined, for a moment, that some member of a gang of low ruffians, or of any body of men, would not long ago have betrayed his accomplices. Each one of a gang so placed is not so much greedy of a reward, or anxious for escape, as fearful of betrayal. He betrays eagerly and early that he may not himself be betrayed. That the secret has not been divulged is the very best of proof that it is, in fact, a secret. The horrors of this dark deed are known only to one, or

two, living human beings, and to God.

"Let us sum up now the meagre yet certain fruits of our long analysis. We have attained the idea either of a fatal accident under the roof of Madame Deluc, or of a murder perpetrated, in the thicket at the Barrière du Roule, by a lover, or at least by an intimate and secret associate of the deceased. This associate is of swarthy complexion. This complexion, the 'hitch' in the bandage, and the 'sailor's knot' with which the bonnet-

ribbon is tied, point to a seaman. His companionship with the deceased, a gay, but not an abject young girl. designates him as above the grade of the common sailor. Here the well-written and urgent communications to the journals are much in the way of corroboration. The circumstance of the first elopement, as mentioned by Le Mercurie, tends to blend the idea of this seaman with that of the 'naval officer' who is first known to have led the unfortunate into crime.

"And here, most fitly, comes the consideration of the continued absence of him of the dark complexion. Let me pause to observe that the complexion of this man is dark and swarthy; it was no common swarthiness which constituted the sole point of remembrance, both as regards Valence and Madame Deluc. But why is this . man absent? Was he murdered by the gang? If so, why are there only traces of the assassinated girl? he scene of the two outrages will naturally be supposed identical. And where is his corpse? The assassins would most probably have disposed of both in the same way. But it may be said that this man lives, and is deterred from making himself known through dread of being charged with the murder. This consideration might be supposed to operate upon him now, at this late period, since it has been given in evidence that he was seen with Marie, but it would have had no force at the period of the deed. The first impulse of an innocent man would have have been to announce the outrage, and to aid in identifying the ruffians. This, policy would have suggested. He had been seen with the girl. He had crossed the river with her in an open ferry-boat. The denouncing of the assassins would have appeared, even to an idiot, the surest and sole means of relieving himself from suspicion. We cannot suppose him, or the night of the fatal Sunday, both innocent himself and incognisant of an outrage committed. Yet only under such circumstances is it possible to imagine that he would bave failed, if slive, in the denouncement of the assassins.

"And what means are ours of attaining the truth? We shall find these means multiplying and gathering distinctness as we proceed. Let us sift to the bottom this affair of the first elopement. Let us know the full history of 'the officer,' with his present circumstances, and his whereabouts at the precise period of the murder. Let us compare with each other the various communications sent to the evening paper, in which the object was to inculpate a gang. This done, let us compare these communications, both as regards style and MS., with those sent to the morning paper at a previous period, and insisting so vehemently upon the guilt of Mennais. And, all this done, let us again compare these various communications with the known MSS, of the officer. Let us endeavour to ascertain, by repeated questionings of Madame Deluc and her boys, as well as of the omnibus-driver, Valence, something more of the personal appearance and bearing of the 'man of dark complexion.' Queries, skilfully directed, will not fail to elicit, from some of these parties, information on this particular point (or upon others), information which the parties themselves may not even be aware of possessing. And let us new trace the boat picked up by the bargeman on the morning of Monday the twenty-third of June, and which was removed from the barge-office without the cognisance of the officer in attendance, and without the rudder, at some period prior to the discovery of the corpse. With a proper caution and perseverance we shall infallibly trace this boat; for not only can the bargeman who picked it up identify it, but the rudder is at hand. The rudder of a sail-boat would not have been abandoned without inquiry by one altogether at ease in heart. And here let me pause to insinuate a question. There was no advertisement of the picking up of this boat. It was silently taken to the barge-office, and as silently removed. But its owner or employer—how happened he, at so early a period as Tuesday morning, to be informed. without the agency of advertisement, of the locality of

the boat taken up on Monday, unless we imagine some connexion with the navy, some personal permanent connexion leading to cognisance of its minute interests, its

petty local news?

"In speaking of the lonely assassin dragging his burden to the shore, I have already suggested the probability of his availing himself of a boat. Now we are to understand that Marie Rogêt was precipitated from a boat. This would naturally have been the case. The corpse could not have been trusted to the shallow waters of the shore. The peculiar marks on the back and shoulders of the victim tell of the bottom ribs of a boat. That the body was found without weight is also corroborative of the idea. If thrown from the shore a weight would have been attached. We can only account for its absence by supposing the murderer to have neglected the precaution of supplying himself with it before pushing off. In the act of consigning the corpse to the water he would unquestionably have noticed his oversight; but then no remedy would have been at hand. Any risk would have been preferred to a return to that accursed shore. Having rid himself of his ghastly charge, the murderer would have hastened to the city; there, at some obscure wharf, he would have leaped on land. But the boatwould he have secured it? He would have been in too great haste for such things as securing a boat. Moreover, in fastening it to the wharf he would have felt as if securing evidence against himself. His natural thought would have been to cast from him, as far as possible, all that had held connexion with his crime. He would not only have fled from the wharf, but he would not have permitted the boat to remain. Assuredly he would have cast it adrift. Let us pursue our fancies. In the morning, the wretch is stricken with unutterable horror at finding that the boat has been picked up and detained at a locality which he is in the daily habit of frequenting -at a locality, perhaps, which his duty compels him to frequent. The next night, without daring to ask for the

rudder, he removes it. Now where is that rudderless boat? Let it be one of our first purposes to discover. With the first glimpse we obtain of it the dawn of our success shall begin. This boat shall guide us with a rapidity which will surprise even ourselves, to him who employed it on the midnight of the fatal Sabbath. Corroboration will rise upon corroboration, and the murderer will be traced."

The apparently slight clue here indicated by Dupin was followed up; and we may state, in conclusion, that the result desired was brought to pass; and that the Prefect fulfilled punctually, although with reluctance, the terms of his compact with the Chevalier.





"There is nothing more odious in knowledge than too much acuteness."

gusty evening in the autumn of 18—, I was enjoying the twofold luxury of meditation and a meerschaum, in company with my friend C. Auguste Dupin, in his little back library, or book-closet, au troisième, No. 33, Rue Dunôt, Faubourg St. Germain. For one hour at least we had maintained a profound silence; while each, to any casual observer, might have seemed intently and exclusively occu-

pied with the curling eddies of smoke that oppressed the atmosphere of the chamber. For myself, however, I was mentally discussing certain topics which had formed matter for conversation between us at an earlier period of the evening; I mean the affair of the Rue Morgue, and the mystery attending the murder of Marie Roget. I looked upon it, therefore, as something of a coincidence, when the door of our apartment was thrown open and admitted our old acquaintance, Monsieur G——, the Prefect of the Parisian police.

We gave him a hearty welcome; for there was nearly half as much of the entertaining as of the contemptible about the man, and we had not seen him for several years. We had been sitting in the dark, and Dupin now arose for the purpose of lighting a lamp, but sat down again, without doing so, upon G.'s saying that he had called to consult us, or rather to ask the opinion of my friend about some official business which

had occasioned a great deal of trouble.

"If it is any point requiring reflection," observed Dupin, as he forebore to enkindle the wick, "we shall

examine it to better purpose in the dark."

"That is another of your odd notions," said the prefect, who had a fashion of calling every thing "odd" that was beyond his comprehension, and thus lived amid an absolute legion of "oddities."

"Very true," said Dupin, as he supplied his visitor with a pipe, and rolled towards him a comfortable chair.

"And what is the difficulty now?" I asked.

" Nothing more in the assassination way, I hope."

"Oh no; nothing of that nature. The fact is, the business is very simple indeed, and I make no doubt that we can manage it sufficiently well ourselves; but then I thought Dupin would like to hear the details of it, because it is so excessively odd."

"Simple and odd," said Dupin.

"Why, yes; and not exactly that, either. The fact is, we have all been a good deal puzzled be-

cause the affair is so simple, and yet baffles us altogether."

"Perhaps it is the very simplicity of the thing which puts you at fault," said my friend.

"What nonsense you do talk!" replied the prefect, laughing heartily.

"Perhaps the mystery is a little too plain," said

Dupin.

- "Oh, good heavens!" who ever heard of such an idea?"
 - "A little too self-evident."
- "Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ho! ho! ho! roared our visitor, profoundly amused; "Oh, Dupin, you will be the death of me yet."

"And what, after all, is the matter on hand?" I

asked.

"Why, I will tell you," replied the prefect, as he gave a long, steady, and contemplative puff, and settled himself in his chair. "I will tell you in a few words; but, before I begin, let me caution you that this is an affair demanding the greatest secrecy, and that I should most probably lose the position I now hold, were it known that I confided it to any one."

" Proceed." said I.

"Or not," said Dupin.

"Well, then; I have received personal information. from a very high quarter, that a certain document of the last importance, has been purloined from the royal apartments. The individual who purloined it is known; this beyond a doubt; he was seen to take it. It is known, also, that it still remains in his possession."
"How is this known?" asked Dupin.

"It is clearly inferred," replied the prefect, "from the nature of the document, and from the non-appearance of certain results which would at once arise from its passing out of the robber's possession; that is to say, from his employing it as he must design in the end to employ it."

"Be a little more explicit," I said.

"Well, I may venture so far as to say that the paper gives its holder a certain power in a certain quarter where such power is immensely valuable." The prefec was fond of the cant of diplomacy.

"Still I do not quite understand," said Dupin.

"No? Well; the disclosure of the document to a third person, who shall he nameless, would bring in question the honour of a personage of most exalted station; and this fact gives the holder of the document an ascendancy over the illustrious personage whose honour and peace are so jeopardized."
"But this ascendancy," I interposed, "would depend

upon the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge

of the robber. Who would dare-"

"The thief," said G., "is the Minister D-, who dares all things, those unbecoming as well as those becoming a man. The method of the theft was not less ingenious than bold. The document in question-a letter, to be frank—had been received by the personage robbed while alone in the royal boudoir. During its perusal she was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the other exalted personage, from whom especially it was her wish to conceal it. After a hurried and vain endeavour to thrust it in a drawer, she was forced to place it, open as it was, upon a table. The address, however, was uppermost, and, the contents thus unexposed, the letter escaped notice. At this juncture enters the Minister D—. His lynx eye immediately perceives the paper, recognises the handwriting of the address, observes the confusion of the personage addressed, and fathoms her secret. After some business transactions, hurried through in his ordinary manner, he produces a letter somewhat similar to the one in question, opens it, pretends to read it, and then places it in close juxtaposition to the other. Again he converses, for some fifteen minutes, upon the public affairs. At length, in taking leave, he takes also from the table the letter to which he had no claim. Its rightful owner saw, but, of course, dared not call attention to the act, in the presence of the third personage who stood at her elbow. The minister decamped, leaving his own letter -one of no importance—upon the table."

"Here, then," said Dupin to me, "you have pre-

cisely what you demand to make the ascendancy complete—the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge

of the robber."

"Yes," replied the prefect; and the power thus attained has, for some months past, been wielded, for political purposes, to a very dangerous extent. The personage robbed is more thoroughly convinced, every day, of the necessity of reclaiming her letter. But this, of course, cannot be done openly. In fine, driven to despair, she has committed the matter to me."

"Than whom," said Dupin, amid a perfect whirlwind of smoke, "no more sagacious agent could, I suppose be desired, or even imagined."

"You flatter me," replied the prefect; "but it is possible that some such opinion may have been entertained."

"It is clear," said I, "as you observe, that the letter is still in possession of the minister; since it is this possession, and not any employment of the letter. which bestows the power. With the employment the

power departs."

"True," said G.; "and upon this conviction I proceeded. My first care was to make thorough search of the minister's hotel; and here my chief embarrassment lay in the necessity of searching without his knowledge. Beyond all things, I have been warned of the danger which would result from giving him reason to suspect our design."

"But," said I, "you are quite au fait in these investigations. The Farisian police have done this thing

often before."

"O yes; and for this reason I did not despair. The

habits of the minister gave me, too, a great advantage. He is frequently absent from home all night. His servants are by no means numerous. They sleep at a distance from their master's apartment, and being chiefly Neapolitans, are readily made drunk. I have keys, as you know, with which I can open any chamber or cabinet in Paris. For three months, a night has not passed, during the greater part of which I have not been engaged, personally, in ransacking the D—Hotel. My honour is interested, and, to mention a great secret, the reward is enormous. So I did not abandon the search until I had become fully satisfied that the thief is a more astute man than myself. I fancy that I have investigated every nook and corner of the premises in which it is possible that the paper can be concealed."

"But is it not possible," I suggested, "that although the letter may be in possession of the minister, as it unquestionably is, he may have concealed it elsewhere than upon his own premises?"

"This is barely possible," said Dupin. "The present peculiar condition of affairs at court, and especially of those intrigues in which D—— is known to be involved, would render the instant availability of the document—
its susceptibility of being produced at a moment's
notice—a point of nearly equal importance with its
possession."

"Its susceptibility of being produced?" said I.

"That is to say, of being destroyed," said Dupin.

"True," I observed; "the paper is clearly, then,
upon the premises. As for its being upon the person
of the minister, we may consider that as out of the question."

"Entirely," said the prefect. "He has been twice waylaid, as if by footpads, and his person rigorously searched under my own inspection."

"You might have spared yourself this trouble," said Dupin. "D—, I presume, is not altogether a

fool, and, if not, must have anticipated these waylayings, as a matter of course."

"Not altogether a fool," said G.; "but then he's a poet, which I take to be only one remove from a fool."

"True," said Dupin, after a long and thoughtful whiff from his meerschaum, "although I have been guilty of certain doggrel myself."

"Suppose you detail," said I, "the particulars of

your search."

"Why the fact is, we took our time, and we searched everywhere. I have had long experience in these affairs. I took the entire building, room by room; devoting the nights of a whole week to each. We examined, first, the furniture of each apartment. We opened every possible drawer; and I presume you know that, to a properly trained police agent, such a thing as a secret drawer is impossible. Any man is a dolt who permits a 'secret' drawer to escape him in a search of this kind. The thing is so plain. There is a certain amount of bulk—of space—to be accounted for in every cabinet. Then we have accurate rules. The fiftieth part of a line could not escape us. After the cabinets, we took the chairs. The cushions we probed with the fine long needles you have seen me employ. From the tables we removed the tops."

"Why so?"

"Sometimes the top of a table, or other similarly arranged piece of furniture, is removed by the person wishing to conceal an article; then the leg is excavated, the article deposited within the cavity, and the top replaced. The bottoms and tops of bed-posts are employed in the same way."

"But could not the cavity be detected by sounding?"

I asked.

"By no means, if, when the article is deposited, a sufficient wadding of cotton be placed around it. Besides, in our case we were obliged to proceed without noise."

"But you could not have removed—you could not have taken to pieces all articles of furniture in which it would have been possible to make a deposit in the manner you mention. A letter may be compressed into a thin spiral roll, not differing much in shape or bulk from a large knitting-needle, and in this form it might be inserted into the rung of a chair, for example.

You did not take to pieces all the chairs?"

"Certainly not; but we did better—we examined the rungs of every chair in the hotel, and, indeed, the jointings of every description of furniture, by the aid of a most powerful microscope. Had there been any traces of recent disturbance, we should not have failed to detect it instantly. A single grain of gimlet-dust, for example, would have been as obvious as an apple. Any disturbance in the glueing—any unusual gaping in the joints—would have sufficed to insure detection."

"I presume you looked to the mirrors, between the boards and the plates, and you probed the beds and the bed-clothes, as well as the curtains and carpets."

"That, of course; and when we had absolutely completed every particle of the furniture in this way, then we examined the house itself. We divided its entire surface into compartments, which we numbered, so that none might be missed; then we scrutinized each individual square inch throughout the premises, including the two houses immediately adjoining, with the microscope, as before."

"The two houses adjoining!" I exclaimed; you

must have had a great deal of trouble."

"We had; but the reward offered is prodigious."

"You include the grounds about the houses?"

"All the grounds are paved with brick. They gave us comparatively little trouble. We examined the moss between the bricks, and found it undisturbed."

"You looked among D----'s papers, of course, and

into the books of the library?"

"Certainly; we opened every package and parcel;

we not only opened every book, but we turned over every leaf in each volume, not contenting ourselves with a mere shake, according to the fashion of some of our police officers. We also measured the thickness of every book-cover, with the most accurate admeasurement, and applied to each the most jealous scrutiny of the microscope. Had any of the bindings been recently meddled with, it would have been utterly impossible that the fact should have escaped observation Some five or six volumes, just from the hands of the binder, we carefully probed, longitudinally, with the needles."

"You explored the floors beneath the carpets?"

"Beyond doubt. We removed every carpet, and examined the boards with the microscope."

"And the paper on the walls?"

" Yes."

"You looked into the cellars?"

"We did."

"Then," I said, "you have been making a miscalculation, and the letter is *not* upon the premises, as you suppose."

"I fear you are right there," said the prefect. "And now, Dupin, what would you advise me to

do ? "

"To make a thorough research of the premises."

"That is absolutely needless," replied G-... "I am not more sure that I breathe than I am that the letter is not at the hotel."

"I have no better advice to give you," said Dupin. "You have, of course, an accurate description of the letter?"

"Oh yes!"—and here the prefect, producing a memorandum-book, proceeded to read aloud a minute account of the internal, and especially of the external, appearance of the missing document. Soon after finishing the perusal of this description, he took his departure, more entirely depressed in spirits than I had ever known the good gentleman before.

In about a month afterwards he paid us another visit, and found us occupied very nearly as before. He took a pipe and a chair, and entered into some ordinary conversation. At length I said:—
"Well, but G——, what of the purloined letter?

"Well, but G—, what of the purloined letter? I presume you have at last made up your mind that there is no such thing as overreaching the minister?"

"Confound him, say I—yes; I made the re-examination, however, as Dupin suggested; but it was all labour lost, as I knew it would be."

"How much was the reward offered, did you say?"

asked Dupin.

- "Why, a very great deal—a very liberal reward—I don't like to say how much, precisely; but one thing I will say, that I would n't mind giving my individual check for fifty thousand francs to any one who could obtain me that letter. The fact is, it is becoming of more and more importance every day; and the reward has been lately doubled. If it were trebled, however, I could do no more than I have done."
- "Why, yes," said Dupin, drawlingly, between the whiffs of his meerschaum, "I really—think, G——, you have not exerted yourself—to the utmost in this matter. You might—do a little more, I think, eh?"

"How?—in what way?"

"Why—puff, puff—you might—puff, puff—employ counsel in the matter, eh?—puff, puff, puff. Do you remember the story they tell of Abernethy?"

"No; hang Abernethy!"

"To be sure! hang him and welcome. But, once upon a time, a certain rich miser conceived the design of spunging upon this Abernethy for a medical opinion. Getting up, for this purpose, an ordinary conversation in a private company, he insinuated his case to the physician, as that of an imaginary individual.

"'We will suppose,' said the miser, 'that his symptoms are such and such; now, doctor, what would you

have directed him to take?'

"'Take!' said Abernethy, 'why, take advice, to be sure.'"

"But," said the prefect, a little discomposed, "I am perfectly willing to take advice, and to pay for it. I would really give fifty thousand francs to any one who would aid me in the matter."

"In that case," replied Dupin, opening a drawer, and producing a check-book, "you may as well fill me up a check for the amount mentioned. When you

have signed it, I will hand you the letter."

I was astounded. The prefect appeared absolutely thunderstricken. For some minutes he remained speechless and motionless, looking incredulously at my friend with open mouth, and eyes that seemed starting from their sockets; then, apparently recovering himself in some measure, he seized a pen, and after several pauses and vacant stares, finally filled up and signed a check for fifty thousand francs, and handed it across the table to Dupin. The latter examined it carefully and deposited it in his pocket-book; then, unlocking an escritoire, took thence a letter and gave it to the prefect. This functionary grasped it in a perfect agony of joy, opened it with a trembling hand, cast a rapid glance at its contents, and then, scrambling and struggling to the door, rushed at length unceremoniously from the room and from the house, without having uttered a syllable since Dupin had requested him to fill up the check.

When he had gone, my friend entered into some

explanations.

"The Parisian police," he said, "are exceedingly able in their way. They are persevering, ingenious, cunning, and thoroughly versed in the knowledge which their duties seem chiefly to demand. Thus, when G—detailed to us his mode of searching the premises at the Hotel D—, I felt entire confidence in his having made a satisfactory investigation, so far as his labours extended."

"So far as his labours extended?" said I.

"Yes," said Dupin. "The measures adopted were not only the best of their kind, but carried out to absolute perfection. Had the letter been deposited within the range of their search, these fellows would, beyond a question, have found it."

I merely laughed—but he seemed quite serious in

all that he said.

"The measures, then," he continued, "were good in their kind, and well executed; their defect lay in their being inapplicable to the case, and to the man. A certain set of highly ingenious resources are, with the prefect, a sort of Procrustean bed, to which he forcibly adapts his designs. But he perpetually errs by being too deep or too shallow for the matter in hand; and many a schoolboy is a better reasoner than he. I knew one about eight years of age, whose success at guessing in the game of 'even and odd' attracted universal admiration. This game is simple, and is played with marbles, One player holds in his hand a number of these toys, and demands of another whether that number is even or odd. If the guess is right, the guesser wins one; if wrong, he loses one. The boy to whom I allude won all the marbles of the school. Of course he had some principle of guessing; and this lay in mere observation and admeasurement. of the astuteness of his opponents. For example, an arrant simpleton is his opponent, and, holding up his closed hand, asks, 'are they even or odd?' Our schoolboy replies 'odd,' and loses; but upon the second trial he wins, for he then says to himself, 'the simpleton had them even upon the first trial, and his amount of cunning is just sufficient to make him have them odd upon the second; I will therefore guess odd;'-he guesses odd, and wins. Now, with a simpleton a degree above the first, he would have reasoned thus:-'This fellow finds that in the first instance I guessed odd, and, in the second, he will propose to himself,

upon the first impulse, a simple variation from even to odd, as did the first simpleton; but then a second thought will suggest that this is too simple a variation, and finally he will decide upon putting it even as before. I will therefore guess even; —he guesses even, and wins. Now this mode of reasoning in the schoolboy, whom his fellows termed 'lucky,'—what, in its last analysis, is it?"

"It is merely," I said, "an identification of the

reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent."

"It is," said Dupin; "and, upon inquiring of the boy by what means he effected the thorough identification in which his success consisted, I received answer as follows:—'When I wish to find out how wise, or how stupid, or how good, or how wicked is any one, or what are his thoughts at the moment, I fashion the expression of my face, as accurately as possible, in accordance with the expression of his, and then wait to see what thoughts or sentiments arise in my mind or heart, as if to match or correspond with the expression.' This response of the schoolboy lies at the bottom of all the spurious profundity which has been attributed to Rochefoucault, to La Bougive, to Machiavelli, and to Campanella."

"And the identification," I said, "of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent, depends, if I understand you aright, upon the accuracy with which the

opponent's intellect is admeasured."

"For its practical value, it depends upon this," replied Dupin; "and the prefect and his cohort fail so frequently, first, by default of this identification, and secondly, by ill-admeasurement, or rather through non-admeasurement, of the intellect with which they are engaged. They consider only their own ideas of ingenuity; and, in searching for anything hidden, advert only to the modes in which they would have hidden it. They are right in this much—that their own ingenuity is a faithful representative of that of

the mass; but when the cunning of the individual felon is diverse in character from their own, the felon foils them, of course. This always happens when it is above their own, and very usually when it is below. They have no variation of principle in their investigation; at best, when urged by some unusual emergency-by some extraordinary reward—they extend or exaggerate their old modes of practice, without touching their principles. What, for example, in this case of D-, has been done to vary the principle of action? What is all this boring, and probing, and sounding, and scrutinizing with the microscope, and dividing the surface of the building into registered square inches—what is it all but an exaggeration of the application of the one principle or set of principles of search, which are based upon the one set of notions regarding human ingenuity, to which the prefect, in the long routine of his duty, has been accustomed? Do you not see he has taken it for granted that all men proceed to conceal a letter, not exactly in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair-leg; but, at least, in some out-of-the-way hole or corner suggested by the same tenor of thought which would urge a man to secrete a letter in a gimlet-hole bored in a chairleg? And do you not see also, that such recherches nooks for concealment are adapted only for ordinary occasions, and would be adopted only by ordinary intellects; for, in all cases of concealment, a disposal of the article concealed—a disposal of it in this recherche manner, is, in the very first instance, presumable and presumed; and thus its discovery depends, not at all upon the acumen, but altogether upon the mere care, patience, and determination of the seekers; and where the case is of importance—or, what amounts to the same thing in the policial eyes, when the reward is of magnitude, the qualities in question have never been known to fail. You will now understand what I meant in suggesting that, had the purloined letter been hidden any where within the limits of the prefect's examination—in other words, had the principle of its concealment been comprehended within the principles of the prefect—its discovery would have been a matter altogether beyond question. This functionary, however, has been thoroughly mystified; and the remote source of his defeat lies in the supposition that the minister is a fool, because he has acquired renown as a poet. All fools are poets—this the prefect feels; and he is merely guilty of a non distributio medii in thence inferring that all poets are fools."

"But is this really the poet?" I asked. "There are two brothers, I know; and both have attained reputation in letters. The minister, I believe, has written learnedly on the Differential Calculus. He is a mathe-

matician, and no poet."

"You are mistaken; I know him well; he is both. As poet and mathematician, he would reason well; as mere mathematician, he could not have reasoned at all, and thus would have been at the mercy of the prefect."

"You surprise me," I said, "by these opinions, which have been contradicted by the voice of the world. You do not mean to set at naught the well-digested idea of centuries. The mathematical reason has long

been regarded as the reason par excellence."

"'Il y a à parier,'" replied Dupin, quoting from Chamfort, "'que toute idée publique, toute convention reçue, est une sottise, car elle a convenue au plus grana nombre.' The mathematicians, I grant you, have done their best to promulgate the popular error to which you allude, and which is none the less an error for its promulgation as truth. With an art worthy a better cause, for example, they have insinuated the term 'analysis' into application to algebra. The French are the originators of this particular deception; but if a term is of any importance—if words derive any value from applicability—then 'analysis' conveys 'algebra' about as much as, in Latin, 'ambitus' implies 'ambition,' 'religio' 'religion,' or 'homines honesti,' a set of honourable men."

"You have a quarrel on hand, I see," said I, "with

some of the algebraists of Paris; but proceed."

"I mean to say," continued Dupin, "that if the minister had been no more than a mathematician, the prefect would have been under no necessity of giving me this check. I knew him, however, as both mathematician and poet, and my measures were adapted to his capacity, with reference to the circumstances by which he was surrounded. I knew him, however, as a courtier, too, and as a bold intriguant. Such a man, I considered, could not fail to be aware of the ordinary policial modes of action. He could not have failed to anticipate—and events have proved that he did not fail to anticipate—the waylayings to which he was subjected. He must have foreseen, I reflected, the secret investigations of his premises. His frequent absences from home at night, which were hailed by the prefect as certain aids to his success, I regarded only as ruses, to afford opportunity for thorough search to the police, and thus the sooner to impress them with the conviction to which G-, in fact, did finally arrive-the conviction that the letter was not upon the premises. 1 felt, also, that the whole train of thought, which I was at some pains in detailing to you just now, concerning the invariable principle of policial action in searches for articles concealed—I felt that this whole train of thought would necessarily pass through the mind of the minister. It would imperatively lead him to despise all the ordinary nooks of concealment. He could not, I reflected, be so weak as not to see that the most intricate and remote recess of his hotel would be as open as his commonest closets to the eyes, to the probes, to the gimlets, and to the microscopes of the prefect. I saw, in fine, that he would be driven, as a matter of course, to simplicity, if not deliberately induced to it as a matter of choice. You will remember, perhaps, how desperately the prefect laughed when I suggested, upon our first interview, that it was just

possible this mystery troubled him so much on account of its being so very self-evident."

"Yes," said I, "I remember his merriment well. I really thought he would have fallen into convulsions."

"The material world," continued Dupin, "abounds with very strict analogies to the immaterial; and thus some colour of truth has been given to the rhetorical dogma, that metaphor, or simile, may be made to strengthen an argument, as well as to embellish a description. The principle of the vis inertia, for example, seems to be identical in physics and metaphysics. It is not more true in the former, that a large body is with more difficulty set in motion than a smaller one, and that its subsequent momentum is commensurate with this difficulty, than it is in the latter, that intellects of the vaster capacity, while more forcible, more constant, and more eventful in their movements than those of inferior grade, are yet the less readily moved, and more embarrassed and full of hesitation in the first few steps of their progress. Again: have you ever noticed which of the street signs, over the shop-doors, are the most attractive of attention?"

"I have never given the matter a thought," I said.

"There is a game of puzzles," he resumed, "which is played upon a map. One party playing requires another to find a given word—the name of town, river, state, or empire—any word, in short, upon the motley and perplexed surface of the chart. A novice in the game generally seeks to embarrass his opponents by giving them the most minutely lettered names; but the adept selects such words as stretch, in large characters, from one end of the chart to the other. These, like the over-largely lettered signs and placards of the street, escape observation by dint of being excessively obvious; and here the physical oversight is precisely analagous with the moral inapprehension by which the intellect suffers to pass unnoticed those considerations which are too obtrusively and too palpably self-evident. But this

is a point, it appears, somewhat above or beneath the understanding of the prefect. He never once thought it probable, or possible, that the minister had deposited the letter immediately beneath the nose of the whole world, by way of best preventing any portion of that

"But the more I reflected upon the daring, dashing, and discriminating ingenuity of D—; upon the fact that the document must always have been at hand, if he intended to use it to good purpose; and upon the decisive evidence, obtained by the prefect, that it was not hidden within the limits of that dignitary's ordinary search—the more satisfied I became that, to conceal this letter, the minister had resorted to the comprehensive and sagacious expedient of not attempting to conceal it at all.

"Full of these ideas, I prepared myself with a pair of green spectacles, and called one fine morning, quite by accident, at the ministerial hotel. I found D—at home, yawning, lounging, and dawdling, as usual, and pretending to be in the last extremity of ennui. He is, perhaps, the most really energetic human being now alive—but that is only when nobody sees him.

"To be even with him, I complained of my weak eyes, and lamented the necessity of the spectacles, under cover of which I cautiously and thoroughly surveyed the whole apartment, while seemingly intent only

upon the conversation of my host.

"I paid especial attention to a large writing-table near which he sat, and upon which lay confusedly, some miscellaneous letters and other papers, with one or two musical instruments and a few books. Here, however, after a long and very deliberate scrutiny, I saw nothing to excite particular suspicion.

"At length my eyes, in going the circuit of the room, fell upon a trumpery fillagree card-rack of paste-board, that hung dangling by a dirty blue ribbon, from a little brass knob just beneath the middle of the

mantel-piece. In this rack, which had three or four compartments, were five or six visiting cards and a solitary letter. This last was much soiled and crumpled. It was torn nearly in two, across the middle—as if a design, in the first instance, to tear it entirely up as worthless, had been altered, or stayed in the second. It had a large black seal, bearing the D——cipher very conspicuously, and was addressed, in a diminutive female hand to D——, the minister himself. It was thrust carelessly, and even, as it seemed, contemptuously,

into one of the uppermost divisions of the rack.

"No sooner had I glanced at this letter, than I concluded it to be that of which I was in search. To be sure it was, to all appearance radically different from the one of which the prefect had read us so minute a description. Here the seal was large and black, with the D—cipher; there it was small and red, with the ducal arms of the S—family. Here, the address to the minister, was diminutive and feminine; there the superscription, to a certain royal personage, was markedly bold and decided; the size alone formed a point of correspondence. But, then, the radicalness of these differences, which was excessive; the dirt; the soiled and torn condition of the paper, so inconsistent with the true methodical habits of D-, and so suggestive of a design to delude the beholder into an idea of the worthlessness of the document; these things, together with the hyper-obtrusive situation of this document, full in the view of every visitor, and thus exactly in accordance with the conclusions to which I had previously arrived; -these things, I say, were strongly corroborative of suspicion, in one who came with the intention to suspect.

"I protracted my visit as long as possible, and, while I maintained a most animated discussion with the minister, upon a topic which I knew well had never failed to interest and excite him, I kept my attention really rivetted upon the letter. In this ex-

amination, I committed to memory its external appearance and arrangement in the rack; and also fell, at 'ength, upon a discovery which set at rest whatever trivial doubt I might have entertained. In scrutinizing the edges of the paper, I observed them to be more chafed than seemed necessary. They presented the broken appearance which is manifested when a stiff paper, having been once folded and pressed with a folder, is refolded in a reversed direction, in the same creases or edges which had formed the original fold. This discovery was sufficient. It was clear to me that the letter had been turned, as a glove inside out, re-directed, and re-sealed. I bade the minister good morning, and took my departure at once, leaving a gold snuff-box upon the table.

"The next morning I called for the snuff-box, when we resumed, quite eagerly, the conversation of the preceding day. While thus engaged, however, a loud report, as if of a pistol, was heard immediately beneath the windows of the hotel, and was succeeded by a series of fearful screams, and the shoutings of a terrified mob. D—rushed to a casement, threw it open, and looked out. In the meantime, I stepped to the card-rack, took the letter, put it in my pocket, and replaced it by a facsimile, (so far as regards externals), which I had carefully prepared at my lodgings—imitating the D—cipher very readily, by means of a seal formed of bread. "The disturbance in the street had been occasioned by

"The disturbance in the street had been occasioned by the frantic behaviour of a man with a musket. He had fired it among a crowd of women and children. It proved, however, to have been without ball, and the fellow was suffered to go his way as a lunatic or a drunkard. When he had gone, D—— came from the window, whither I had followed him immediately upon securing the object in view. Soon afterwards I bade him farewell. The pretended lunatic was a man in my own pay."

"But what purpose had you," I asked, "in replacing the letter by a fac-simile? Would it not have been better, at the first visit, to have seized it openly, and de-

parted?"

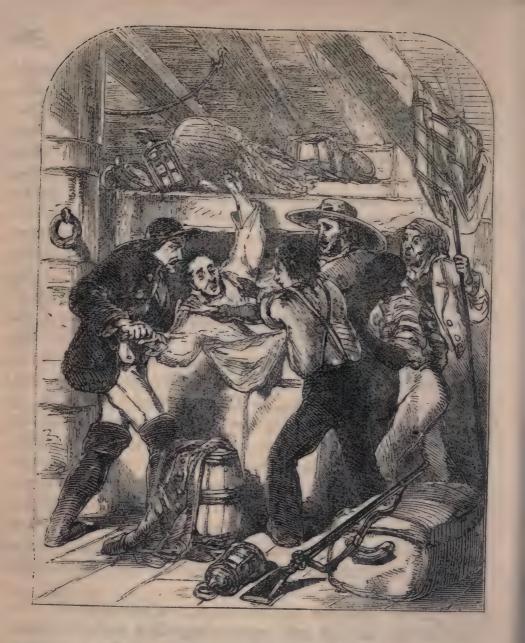
"D-," replied Dupin, " is a desperate man, and a man of nerve. His hotel, too, is not without attendants devoted to his interests. Had I made the wild attempt you suggest, I might never have left the ministerial presence alive. The good people of Paris might have heard of me no more. But I had an object, apart from these considerations. You know my political prepossessions. In this matter, I act as a partisan of the lady concerned. For eighteen months the minister has had her in his power. She has now him in hers-since, being unaware that the letter is not in his possession, he will proceed with his exactions as if it was. Thus will he inevitably commit himself at once to his political destruction. His downfall, too, will not be more precipitate than awkward. It is all very well to talk about the facilis descensus Averni; but in all kinds of climbing, as Catalani said of singing, it is far more easy to get up than to come down. In the present instance, I have no sympathy—at least no pity for him who descends. He is that monstrum horrendum -an unprincipled man of genius. I confess, however, that I should like very well to know the precise character of his thoughts, when, being defied by her whom the prefect terms 'a certain personage,' he is reduced to opening the letter which I left for him in the card-rack."

"How? did you put anything particular in it?"

"Why—it did not seem altogether right to leave the interior blank—that would have been insulting. D——, at Vienna once, did me an evil turn, which I told him, quite good-humouredly, that I should remember. So, as I knew he would feel some curiosity in regard to the identity of the person who had outwitted him, I thought it a pity not to give him a clue. He is well acquainted with my MS., and I just copied into the middle of the blank sheet the words—

Is worthy of Thyestes, if not of Atreus.

They are to be found in Crébillon's 'Atrée.'"



The Premature Burial.

THERE are certain themes, of which the interest is all-absorbing, but which are too entirely horrible for the purposes of legitimate fiction. These the mere romanticist must eschew, if he do not wish to offend, or to disgust. They are with propriety handled, only when the severity and majesty of truth sanctify and sustain them. We thrill, for example, with the most intense

of "pleasurable pain" over the accounts of the Passage of the Beresina, of the Earthquake at Lisbon, of the Plague at London, of the Massacre of St. Barthelomew, or of the stifling of the hundred and twenty-three prisoners in the Black Hole at Calcutta. But, in these accounts, it is the fact—it is the reality—it is the history which excites. As inventions, we should regard them with simple abhorrence.

I have mentioned some few of the more prominent and august calamities on record; but, in these, it is the extent, not less than the character of the calamity, which so vividly impresses the fancy. I need not remind the reader that, from the long and weird catalogue of human miseries, I might have selected many individual instances more replete with essential suffering than any of these vast generalities of disaster. The true wretchedness, indeed, the ultimate woe, is particular, not diffuse. That the ghastly extremes of agony are endured by man, the unit, and never by man, the mass—for this let us thank a merciful God!

To be buried while alive, is, beyond question, the most terriffic of these extremes which has ever fallen to the lot of mere mortality. That it has frequently, very frequently, so fallen, will scarcely be denied by those who think. The boundaries which divide life from death, are at best shadowy and vague. Who shall say where the one ends, and where the other begins? We know that there are diseases in which occur total cessations of all the apparent functions of vitality, and yet in which these cessations are merely suspensions, properly so called. They are only temporary pauses in the incomprehensible mechanism. A certain period elapses, and some unseen mysterious principle again sets in motion the magic pinions and the wizard wheels. The silver cord was not for ever loosed, nor the golden bow' irreparably broken. But where, meantime, was the soul?

Apart, however, from the inevitable conclusion,

a priori, that such causes must produce such effectsthat the well-known occurrence of such cases of suspended animation must naturally give rise, now and then, to premature interments—apart from this consideration, we have the direct testimony of medical and ordinary experience to prove that a vast number of such interments have actually taken place. I might refer at once, if necessary, to a hundred well authenticated instances. One of very remarkable character occurred, not very long ago, in the city of Baltimore, where it occasioned a painful, intense, and widely extended excitement. The wife of one of the most respectable citizens—a lawyer of eminence and a member of Congress-was seized with a sudden and unaccountable illness, which completely baffled the skill of her physicians. After much suffering, she died, or was supposed to die. No one suspected, indeed, or had reason to suspect, that she was not actually dead. She presented all the ordinary appearances of death. face assumed the usual pinched and sunken outline. The lips were of the usual marble pallor. The eyes were lustreless. There was no warmth. Pulsation had ceased. For three days the body was preserved unburied, during which it had acquired a stony rigidity. The funeral, in short, was hastened, on account of the rapid advance of what was supposed to be decomposition.

The lady was deposited in her family vault, which, for three subsequent years, was undisturbed. At the expiration of this term, it was opened for the reception of a sarcophagus; but, alas! how fearful a shock awaited the husband, who, personally, threw open the door. As its portals swung outwardly back, some white-apparelled object fell rattling within his arms. It was the skeleton of his wife in her yet unmouldered shroud.

A careful investigation rendered it evident that she had revived within two days after her entombment—that her struggles within the coffin had caused it to fall

from a ledge, or shelf, to the floor, where it was so broken as to permit her escape. A lamp which had been accidentally left, full of oil, within the tomb, was found empty; it might have been exhausted, however, by evaporation. On the uppermost of the steps which led down into the dread chamber, was a large fragment of the coffin, with which it seemed she had endeavoured to arrest attention, by striking the iron door. While thus occupied, she probably swooned, or possibly died, through sheer terror; and, in falling, her shroud became entangled in some iron-work which projected interiorly.

Thus she remained, and thus she rotted, erect.

In the year 1810, a case of living inhumation happened in France, attended with circumstances which go far to warrant the assertion, that truth is, indeed, stranger than fiction. The heroine of the story was a Mademoiselle Victorine Lafourcade, a young girl of illustrious family, of wealth, and of great personal beauty. Among her numerous suitors was Julien Bossuet, a poor litterateur, or journalist, of Paris. His talents and general amiability had recommended him to the notice of the heiress, by whom he seems to have been truly beloved; but her pride of birth decided her, finally, to reject him, and to wed a Monsieur Renelle, a banker, and a diplomatist of some eminence. After marriage, however, this gentleman neglected, and, perhaps, even more positively ill-treated her. Having passed with him some wretched years, she died,-at least her condition so closely resembled death as to deceive every one who saw her. She was buried-not in a vault-but in an ordinary grave in the village of her nativity. Filled with despair, and still inflamed by the memory of a profound attachment, the lover journeys from the capital to the remote province in which the village lies, with the romantic purpose of disinterring the corpse, and possessing himself of its luxuriant tresses. He reaches the grave. At midnight he unearths the coffin, opens it, and is in the acc of detaching the hair, when he is arrested by the unclosing of the beloved eyes. In fact, the lady had been buried alive Vitality had not altogether departed; and she was aroused, by the caresses of her lover, from the lethargy which had been mistaken for death. He bore her frantically to his lodgings in the village. He employed certain powerful restoratives, suggested by no little medical learning. In fine, she revived. She recognized her preserver. She remained with him until, by slow degrees, she fully recovered her original health. Her woman's heart was not adamant, and this last lesson of love sufficed to soften it. She bestowed it upon Bossuet. She returned no more to her husband, but concealing from him her resurrection, fled with her lover to America. Twenty years afterwards, the two returned to France, in the persuasion that time had so greatly altered the lady's appearance, that her friends would be unable to recognize her. They were mistaken, how-ever; for, at the first meeting, Monsieur Renelle did actually recognize, and make claim to his wife. This claim she resisted; and a judicial tribunal sustained her in her resistance-deciding, that the peculiar circumstances, with the long lapse of years, had extingushed, not only equitably, but legally, the authority of the husband.

In the Chirurgical Journal of Leipsic, a periodical of high authority and merit, a very distressing event of the character in question was recently recorded:—

An officer of artillery, a man of gigantic stature, and of robust health, being thrown from an unmanageable horse, received a very severe contusion upon the head, which rendered him insensible at once. The skull was slightly fractured; but no immediate danger was apprehended. Trepanning was accomplished successfully. He was bled, and many other of the ordinary means of relief were adopted. Gradually, however, he fell into a more and more hopeless state of stupor; and, finally, it was thought that he died.

The weather was warm; and he was buried, with indecent haste, in one of the public cemeteries. His funeral took place on Thursday. On the Sunday following, the grounds of the cemetery were, as usual, much thronged with visitors; and, about noon, an intense excitement was created by the declaration of a peasant, that, while sitting upon the grave of the officer, he had distinctly felt a commotion of the earth, as if occasioned by some one struggling beneath. At first, little attention was paid to the man's asseveration; but his evident terror, and the dogged obstinacy with which he persisted in his story, had at length their natural effect upon the crowd. Spades were hurriedly procured, and the grave, which was shamefully shallow, was, in a few minutes, so far thrown open, that the head of its occupant appeared. He was then, seemingly, dead; but he sat nearly erect within his coffin, the lid of which, in his furious struggles, he had partially uplifted.

He was forthwith conveyed to the nearest hospital,

He was forthwith conveyed to the nearest hospital, and there pronounced to be still living, although in an asphytic condition. After some hours he revived, recognised individuals of his acquaintance, and, in broken

sentences, spoke of his agonies in the grave.

From what he related, it was clear that he must have been conscious of life for more than an hour, while inhumed, before lapsing into insensibility. The grave was carelessly and loosely filled with an exceedingly porous soil; and thus some air was necessarily admitted. He heard the footsteps of the crowd overhead, and endeavoured to make himself heard in turn. It was the tumult within the grounds of the cemetery, he said, which appeared to awaken him from a deep sleep; but no sooner was he awake than he became fully aware of the awful horrors of his position.

This patient, it is recorded, was doing well, and seemed to be in a fair way of ultimate recovery, but fell a victim to the quackeries of medical experiment. The galvanic battery was applied; and he suddenly

expired in one of those ecstatic paroxysms which, occa-

sionally, it superinduces.

The mention of the galvanic battery, nevertheless, recalls to my memory a well-known and very extraordinary case in point, where its action proved the means of restoring to animation a young attorney of London, who had been interred for two days. This occurred in 1831, and created, at the time, a very profound sensation wherever it was made the subject of converse.

The patient, Mr. Edward Stapleton, had died, apparently, of typhus fever, accompanied with some anomalous symptoms which had excited the curiosity of his medical attendants. Upon his seeming decease, his friends were requested to sanction a post mortem examination, but declined to permit it. As often happens, when such refusals are made, the practitioners resolved to disinter the body and dissect it at leisure, in private. Arrangements were easily effected with some of the numerous corps of body-snatchers with which London then abounded; and, upon the third night after the funeral, the supposed corpse was unearthed from a grave eight feet deep, and deposited in the operating chamber of one of the private hospitals.

An incision of some extent had been actually made in the abdomen, when the fresh and undecayed appearance of the subject suggested an application of the battery. One experiment succeeded another, and the customary effects supervened, with nothing to characterize them in any respect, except, upon one or two occasions, a more than ordinary degree of life-likeness

in the convulsive action.

It grew late. The day was about to dawn; and it was thought expedient, at length, to proceed at once to the dissection. A student, however, was especially desirous of testing a theory of his own, and insisted upon applying the battery to one of the pectoral muscles. A rough gash was made, and a wire hastily

brought in contact; when the patient, with a hurried, but quite unconvulsive movement, arose from the table, stepped into the middle of the floor, gazed about him uneasily for a few seconds, and then—spoke. What he said was unintelligible; but words were uttered; the syllabification was distinct. Having spoken, he fell

For some moments all were paralyzed with awe; but the urgency of the case soon restored them their presence of mind. It was seen that Mr. Stapleton was alive, although in a swoon. Upon exhibition of ether, he revived and was rapidly restored to health, and to the society of his friends—from whom, however, all knowledge of his resuscitation was withheld, until a relapse was no longer to be apprehended. Their wonder—their rapturous astonishment—may be conceived.

The most thrilling peculiarity of this incident, nevertheless, is involved in what Mr. S. himself asserts. He declares that at no period was he altogether insensible—that, dully and confusedly, he was aware of everything which happened to him, from the moment in which he was pronounced dead by his physicians, to that in which he fell swooning to the floor of the hospital. "I am alive," were the uncomprehended words which, upon recognising the locality of the dissecting room, he had endeavoured, in his extremity, to utter.

It were an easy matter to multiply such histories as these; but I forbear; for, indeed, we have no need of such to establish the fact that premature interments occur. When we reflect how very rarely, from the nature of the case, we have it in our power to detect them, we must admit that they may frequently occur without our cognizance. Scarcely, in truth, is a grave-yard ever encroached upon, for any purpose, to any great extent, that skeletons are not found in postures which suggest the most fearful of suspicions.

Fearful, indeed, the suspicion—but more fearful the

doom! It may be asserted, without hesitation, that no event is so terribly well adapted to inspire the supremeness of bodily and of mental distress, as is burial before death. The unendurable oppression of the lungs—the stifling fumes of the damp earth—the clinging to the death-garments—the rigid embrace of the narrow house —the blackness of the absolute Night—the silence like a sea that overwhelms—the unseen but palpable presence of the Conqueror Worm-these things, with thoughts of the air and grass above, with memory of dear friends who would fly to save us if but informed of our fate, and with consciousness that of this fate they can never be informed—that our hopeless portion is that of the really dead—these considerations, I say, carry into the heart, which still palpitates, a degree of appalling and intolerable horror from which the most daring imagination must recoil. We know of nothing so agonizing upon earth—we can dream of nothing half so hideous in the realms of the nethermost hell. thus all narratives upon this topic have an interest profound; an interest, nevertheless, which, through the sacred awe of the topic itself, very properly and very peculiarly depends upon our conviction of the truth of the matter narrated. What I have now to tell, is of my own actual knowledge-of my own positive and personal experience:-

For several years, I had been subject to attacks of the singular disorder which physicians have agreed to term catalepsy, in default of a more definitive title. Although both the immediate and the predisposing causes, and even the actual diagnosis of this disease, are still mysterious, its obvious and apparent character is sufficiently well understood. Its variations seem to be chiefly of degree. Sometimes the patient lies, for a day only, or even for a shorter period, in a species of exaggerated lethargy. He is senseless and externally motionless; but the pulsation of the heart is still faintly perceptible; some traces of warmth remain; a slight

colour lingers within the centre of the cheek; and, upon application of a mirror to the lips, we can detect a torpid, unequal, and vacillating action of the lungs. Then, again, the duration of the trance is for weekseven for months; while the closest scrutiny, and the most rigorous medical tests, fail to establish any material distinction between the state of the sufferer and what we conceive of absolute death. Very usually, he is saved from premature interment solely by the knowledge of his friends that he has been previously subject to catalepsy, by the consequent suspicion excited, and, above all, by the non-appearance of decay. The advances of the malady are, luckily, gradual. The first manifestations, although marked, are unequivocal. The fits grow successively more and more distinctive, and endure each for a longer term than the preceding. In this lies the principal security from inhumation. The unfortunate whose first attack should be of the extreme character which is occasionally seen, would almost inevitably be consigned alive to the tomb.

My own case differed in no important particular from those mentioned in medical books. Sometimes, without any apparent cause, I sank, little by little, into a condition of semi-syncope, or half swoon; and, in this condition, without pain, without ability to stir, or, strictly speaking, to think, but with a dull lethargic consciousness of life and of the presence of those who surrounded my bed, I remained, until the crisis of the disease restored me, suddenly, to perfect sensation. At other times, I was quickly and impetuously smitten. I grew sick, and numb, and chilly, and dizzy, and so fell prostrate at once. Then, for weeks, all was void, and black, and silent, and Nothing became the universe. Total annihilation could be no more. From these latter attacks I awoke, however, with a gradation slow in proportion to the suddenness of the seizure. Just as the day dawns to the friendless and houseless beggar who roams the streets throughout the long desolate winter night—just so tardily—just so wearily—just so cheerily

came back the light of the soul to me.

Apart from the tendency to trance, however, my general health appeared to be good; nor could I perceive that it was at all affected by the one prevalent malady—unless, indeed, an idiosyncrasy in my ordinary sleep may be looked upon as superinduced. Upon awaking from slumber, I could never gain, at once, thorough possession of my senses, and always remained, for many minutes, in much bewilderment and perplexity;—the mental faculties in general, but the memory especially, being in a condition of absolute abeyance.

In all that I endured, there was no physical suffering, but of moral distress an infinitude. My fancy grew charnel. I talked "of worms, of tombs, and epitaphs." I was lost in reveries of death, and the idea of premature burial held continual possession of my brain. The ghastly danger to which I was subjected, haunted me day and night. In the former, the torture of meditation was excessive—in the latter, supreme. When the grim darkness overspread the earth, then, with very horror of thought, I shook—shook as the quivering plumes upon the hearse. When nature could endure wakefulness no longer, it was with a struggle that I consented to sleep—for I shuddered to reflect that, upon awaking, I might find myself the tenant of a grave. And when, finally, I sank into slumber, it was only to rush at once into a world of phantasms, above which, with vast, sable, overshadowing wings, hovered, predominant, the one sepulchral idea.

Phantasies such as these, presenting themselves at night, extended their terrific influence far into my waking hours. My nerves became thoroughly unstrung, and I fell a prey to perpetual horror. I hesitated to ride, or to walk, or to indulge in any exercise that would carry me from home. In fact, I no longer dared trust myself out of the immediate presence of those who were aware of my proneness to catalepsy

lest, falling into one of my usual fits, I should be buried before my real condition could be ascertained. I doubted the care, the fidelity, of my dearest friends. I dreaded that, in some trance of more than customary duration, they might be prevailed upon to regard me as irrecoverable. I even went so far as to fear that, as I occasioned much trouble, they might be glad to consider any very protracted attack as sufficient excuse for getting rid of me altogether. It was in vain they endeavoured to reassure me by the most solemn promises. I exacted the most sacred oaths, that under no circumstances they would bury me until decomposition had so materially advanced as to render farther preservation impossible. And, even then, my mortal terrors would listen to no reason-would accept no consolation. I entered into a series of elaborate precautions. Among other things, I had the family vault so remodelled as to admit of being readily opened from within. The slightest pressure upon a long lever that extended far into the tomb would cause the iron portals to fly back. There were arrangements also for the free admission of air and light, and convenient receptacles for food and water, within immediate reach of the coffin intended for my reception. This coffin was warmly and softly padded, and was provided with a lid, fashioned upon the principle of the vault-door, with the addition of springs so contrived that the feeblest movement of the body would be sufficient to set it at liberty. Besides all this, there was suspended from the roof of the tomb, a large bell, the rope of which, it was designed, should extend through a hole in the coffin, and so be fastened to one of the hands of the corpse. But, alas! what avails the vigilance against the destiny of man? Not even these well-contrived securities sufficed to save from the uttermost agonies of living inhumation, a wretch to these agonies foredoomed!

There arrived an epoch—as often before there had arrived—in which I found myself emerging from total

unconsciousness into the first feeble and indefinite sense of existence. Slowly—with a tortoise gradation—approached the faint gray dawn of the psychal day. A torpid uneasiness. An apathetic endurance of dull pain. No care—no hope—no effort. Then, after long interval, a ringing in the ears; then, after a lapse still longer, a pricking or tingling sensation in the extremities; then a seemingly eternal period of pleasurable quiescence, during which the awakening feelings are struggling into thought; then a brief re-sinking into nonentity; then a sudden recovery. At length the slight quivering of an eye-lid, and immediately thereupon, an electric shock of a terror, deadly and indefinite, which sends the blood in torrents from the temples to the heart. And now the first positive effort to think. And now the first endeavour to remember. And now a partial and evanescent success. And now the memory has so far regained its dominion, that, in some measure, I am cognizant of my state. I feel that I am not awaking from ordinary sleep. I recollect that I have been subject to catalepsy. And now, at last, as if by the rush of an ocean, my shuddering spirit is overwhelmed by the one grim danger—by the one spectral and ever-prevalent idea.

For some minutes after this fancy possessed me, I remained without motion. And why? I could not summon courage to move. I dared not make the effort which was to satisfy me of my fate—and yet there was something at my heart which whispered me—it was sure. Despair—such as no other species of wretchedness ever calls into being—despair alone urged me, after long irresolution, to uplift the heavy lids of my eyes. I uplifted them. It was dark—all dark. I knew that the fit was over. I knew that the crisis of my disorder had long passed. I knew that I had now fully recovered the use of my visual faculties—and yet it was dark—all dark—the intense and utter raylessness of the

Night that endureth for evermore

I endeavoured to shriek; and my lips and my parched tongue moved convulsively together in the attempt—but no voice issued from the cavernous lungs, which, oppressed as if by the weight of some incumbent mountain, gasped and palpitated, with the heart, at

every elaborate and struggling inspiration.

The movement of the jaws, in this effort to cry aloud, showed me that they were bound up, as is usual with the dead. I felt, too, that I lay upon some hard substance; and by something similar my sides were, also, closely compressed. So far, I had not ventured to stir any of my limbs; but now I violently threw up my arms, which had been lying at length, with the wrists crossed. They struck a solid wooden substance, which extended above my person at an elevation of not more than six inches from my face. I could no longer

doubt that I reposed within a coffin at last.

And now, amid all my infinite miseries, came sweetly the cherub Hope—for I thought of my precautions. I writhed, and made spasmodic exertions to force open the lid: it would not move. I felt my wrists for the bell-rope: it was not to be found. And now the comforter fled for ever, and a still sterner despair reigned triumphant; for I could not help perceiving the absence of the paddings which I had so carefully prepared; and then, too, there came suddenly to my nostrils the strong peculiar odour of moist earth. The conclusion was irresistible. I was not within the vault. I had fallen into a trance while absent from home—while among strangers—when, or how, I could not remember—and it was they who had buried me as a dog—nailed up in some common coffin—and thrust, deep, deep, and for ever, into some ordinary and nameless grave.

As this awful conviction forced itself thus into the innermost chambers of my soul, I once again struggled to cry aloud: and in this second endeavour I succeeded. A long, wild, and continuous shriek, or yell, of agony, resounded through the realms of the subterrene night.

"Hillo! hillo, there!" said a gruff voice, in reply.
"What the devil's the matter now?" said a second.

"Get out o' that!" said a third.

"What do you mean by yowling in that ere kind of style, like a cattymount?" said a fourth; and hereupon I was seized and shaken without ceremony, for several minutes, by a junto of very rough-looking individuals. They did not arouse me from my slumber—for I was wide awake when I screamed—but they restored me to

the full possession of my memory.

This adventure occurred near Richmond, in Virginia. Accompanied by a friend. I had proceeded, upon a gunning expedition, some miles down the banks of James River. Night approached, and we were overtaken by a storm. The cabin of a small sloop lying at anchor in the stream, and laden with garden mould, afforded us the only available shelter. We made the best of it, and passed the night on board. I slept in one of the only two berths in the vessel; and the berths of a sloop of sixty or seventy tons need scarcely be described. That which I occupied had no bedding of any kind. Its extreme width was eighteen inches. The distance of its bottom from the deck overhead, was precisely the same. I found it a matter of exceeding difficulty to squeeze myself in. Nevertheless, I slept soundly; and the whole of my vision-for it was no dream, and no nightmare—arose naturally from the circumstances of my position-from my ordinary bias of thought-and from the difficulty, to which I have alluded, of collecting my senses, and especially of regaining my memory, for a long time after awaking from slumber. The men who shook me were the crew of the sloop, and some labourers engaged to unload it. From the load itself came the earthy smell. The bandage about the jaws was a silk handkerchief, in which I had bound up my head, in default of my customary nightcap.

The tortures endured, however, were indubitably quite equal, for the time, to those of actual sepulture. They were fearfully—they were inconceivably hideous; but out of evil proceeded good; for their very excess wrought in my spirit an inevitable revulsion. My soul acquired tone—acquired temper. I went abroad. I took vigorous exercise. I breathed the free air of heaven. I thought upon other subjects than death. I discarded my medical books. "Buchan" I burned. I read no "Night Thoughts"—no fustian about churchyards—no bugaboo tales—such as this. In short, I became a new man, and lived a man's life. From that memorable night, I dismissed for ever my charnel apprehensions, and with them vanished the cataleptic disorder, of which, perhaps, they had been less the consequence than the cause.

There are moments when, even to the sober eye of reason, the world of our sad humanity may assume the semblance of a hell; but the imagination of man is no Carathis, to explore with impunity its every cavern. Alas! the grim legion of sepulchral terrors cannot be regarded as altogether fanciful; but, like the demons in whose company Afrasiab made his voyage down the Oxus, they must sleep, or they will devour us—they

must be suffered to slumber, or we perish.

Some Words with a Mummy.

HE symposium of the preceding evening had been a little too much for my nerves. I had a wretched headach, and was desperately drowsy. Instead of going out, therefore, to spend the evening, as I had proposed, it occurred to me that I could not do a wiser thing than just eat a mouthful of supper and go immediately to bed.

Having concluded a frugal meal, and donned my nightcap, with the serene hope of enjoying it till noon the next day, I placed my head upon the pillow, and, through the aid of a capital conscience, fell into a pro-

found slumber forthwith.

But when were the hopes of humanity fulfilled? I could not have completed my third snore when there came a furious ringing at the street-door bell, and then an impatient thumping at the knocker, which awakened me at once. In a minute afterwards, and while I was rubbing my eyes, my wife thrust in my face a note, from my old friend, Dr. Ponnonner. It ran thus:—

"Come to me, by all means," my dear good friend, as soon as you receive this. Come and help us to rejoice. At last, by long persevering diplomacy. I have gained the assent of the Directors of the City Museum, to my examination of the mummy—you know the one I mean. I have permission to unswathe it and open it, if desirable. A few friends only will be present—you, of course. The mummy is now at my house, and we shall begin to unroll it at eleven to-night."

By the time I had reached the "Ponnonner," it struck me that I was as wide awake as a man need be. I leaped out of bed in an ecstacy, overthrowing all in my way; dressed myself with a rapidity truly marvellous; and set off, at the top of my speed, for the doctor's.

There I found a very eager company assembled. They had been awaiting me with much impatience; the mummy was extended upon the dining-table; and the moment I entered, its examination was commenced.

It was one of a pair brought, several years previously, by Captain Arthur Sabretash, a cousin of Ponnonner's, from a tomb near Eleithias, in the Lybian mountains, a considerable distance above Thebes on the Nile. The grottoes at this point, although less magnificent than the Theban sepulchres, are of higher interest. on account of affording more numerous illustrations of the private life of the Egyptians. The chamber from which our specimen was taken, was said to be very rich in such illustrations—the walls being completely covered with fresco paintings and bas-reliefs, while statues, vases, and mosaic work of rich patterns, indicated the vast wealth of the deceased.

The treasure had been deposited in the Museum precisely in the same condition in which Captain Sabretash had found it; that is to say, the coffin had not been disturbed. For eight years it had thus stood, subject only externally to public inspection. We had now, therefore, the complete mummy at our disposal; and to those who are aware how very rarely the unransacked antique reaches our shores, it will be evident at once, that we had great reason to congratulate our-

Approaching the table, I saw on it a large box or case, nearly seven feet long, and perhaps three feet wide, by two feet and a half deep. It was oblong—not coffin shaped. The material was at first supposed to be the wood of the sycamore (platinus), but, upon cutting into it, we found it to be pasteboard, or, more

properly, papier maché, composed of papyrus. It was thickly ornamented with paintings, representing funeral scenes, and other mournful subjects—insterspersed among which, in every variety of position, were certain series of hieroglyphical characters, intended, no doubt, for the name of the departed. By good luck, Mr. Gliddon formed one of our party; and he had no difficulty in translating the letters, which were simply phonetic, and represented the word, Allamistakeo.

We had some difficulty in getting this case open without injury; but having at length accomplished the task, we came to a second, coffin-shaped, and very considerably less in size than the exterior one, but resembling it precisely in every other respect. The interval between the two was filled with resin, which had, in some degree, defaced the colours of the interior

box.

Upon opening this latter (which we did quite easily), we arrived at a third case, also coffin-shaped, and varying from the second one in no particular, except in that of its material, which was cedar, and still emitted the peculiar and highly aromatic odour of that wood. Between the second and third case there was no interval—

the one fitting accurately within the other.

Removing the third case, we discovered and took out the body itself. We had expected to find it, as usual, enveloped in frequent rolls or bandages of linen; but, in place of these, we found a sort of sheath, made of papyrus, and coated with a layer of plaster, thickly gilt and painted. The paintings represented subjects connected with the various supposed duties of the soul, and its presentation to different divinities, with numerous identical human figures, intended, very probably, as portraits of the persons embalmed. Extending from head to foot, was a columnar, or perpendicular inscription, in phonetic hieroglyphics, giving again his name and titles, and the names and titles of his relations.

Around the neck thus unsheathed, was a collar of cylindrical glass beads, diverse in colour, and so arrangd as to form images of deities, of the scarabæus, &c., with the winged globe. Around the small of the waist was a similar collar or belt.

Stripping off the papyrus, we found the flesh in excellent preservation, with no perceptible odour. The colour was reddish. The skin was hard, smooth, and glossy. The teeth and hair were in good condition. The eyes (it seemed) had been removed, and glass ones substituted, which were very beautiful and wonderfully life-like, with the exception of somewhat too-determined a stare. The finger and the nails were brilliantly gilded.

Mr. Gliddon was of opinion, from the redness of the epidermis, that the embalment had been effected altogether by asphaltum; but, on scraping the surface with a steel instrument, and throwing into the fire some of the powder thus obtained, the flavour of camphor and

other sweet-scented gums became apparent.

We searched the corpse very carefully for the usual openings through which the entrails are extracted, but, to our surprise, we could discover none. No member of the party was at that period aware that entire or unopened mummies are not unfrequently met. The brain it was customary to withdraw through the nose; the intestines through an incision in the side; the body was then shaved, washed, and salted; then laid aside for several weeks, when the operation of embalming, properly so called, began.

As no trace of an opening could be found, Dr. Ponnonner was preparing his instruments for dissection, when I observed that it was then past two o'clock. Hereupon, it was agreed to postpone the internal examination until the next evening; and we were about to separate for the present, when some one suggested

an experiment or two with the voltaic pile.

The application of electricity to a mummy, three or

four thousand years old at the least, was an idea, if not very sage, still sufficiently original, and we all caught it at once. About one-tenth in earnest and nine-tenths in jest, we arranged a battery in the doctor's study, and

conveyed thither the Egyptian.

It was only after much trouble that we succeeded in laying bare some portions of the temporal muscle, which appeared of less stony rigidity than other parts of the frame, but which, as we had anticipated, of course, gave no indication of gaivanic susceptibility when brought in contact with the wire. This, the first trial, indeed, seemed decisive, and, with a hearty laugh at our own absurdity, we were bidding each other good night, when my eyes, happening to fall upon those of



the mummy, were there immediately rivetted in amazement. My brief glance, in fact, had sufficed to assure me that the orbs which we had all supposed to be glass, and which were originally noticeable for a certain wild stare, were now so far covered by the lids, that only a small portion of the tunica albuginea remained visible.

With a shout, I called attention to the fact, and it

became immediately obvious to all.

I cannot say that I was alarmed at the phenomenon, because "alarmed" is, in my case, not exactly the word. It is possible, however, that I might have been a little nervous. As for the rest of the company, they really made no attempt at concealing the downright fright which possessed them. Dr. Ponnonner was a man to be pitied. Mr. Gliddon, by some peculiar process, rendered himself invisible. Mr. Silk Buckingham, I fancy, will scarcely be so bold as to deny that he made

his way, upon all fours, under the table.

After the first shock of astonishment, however, we resolved, as a matter of course, upon farther experiment forthwith. Our operations were now directed against the great toe of the right foot. We made an incision over the outside of the exterior os sesamoideum pollicis pedis, and thus got at the root of the abductor muscle. Re-adjusting the battery, we now applied the fluid to the bisected nerves—when, with a movement of exceeding life-likeness, the mummy first drew up its right knee so as to bring it nearly in contact with the abdomen, and then straightening the limb with inconceivable force, bestowed a kick upon Doctor Ponnonner, which had the effect of discharging that gentleman, like an arrow from a catapult, through a window into the street below.

We rushed out, en masse, to bring in the mangled remains of the victim, but had the happiness to meet him upon the staircase; coming up in an unaccountable hurry, brimful of the most ardent philosophy, and more

than ever impressed with the necessity of prosecuting our experiments with rigour and with zeal.

It was by his advice, accordingly, that we made, upon the spot, a profound incision into the tip of the subject's nose, while the doctor himself, laying violent hands upon it, pulled it into vehement contact with the wire.

Morally and physically-figuratively and literallywas the effect electric. In the first place, the corpse opened its eyes, and winked very rapidly for several minutes, as does Mr. Barnes in the pantomime; in the second place, it sneezed; in the third, it sat upon end; in the fourth, it shook its fist in Doctor Ponnonner's face; in the fifth, turning to Messieurs Gliddon and Buckingham, it addressed them in very capital Egyptian, thus:

"I must say, gentlemen, that I am as much surprised as I am mortified, at your behaviour. Of Doctor Ponnonner nothing better was to be expected. He is a poor, little, fat fool, who knows no better. I pity and forgive him. But you, Mr. Gliddon-and you, Silk-who have travelled and resided in Egypt until one might imagine you to the manor born - you, I say, who have been so much among us that you speak Egyptian fully as well, I think, as you write your mother-tongue—you, whom I have always been led to regard as the firm friend of the mummies—I really did anticipate more gentlemanly conduct from you. What am I to think of your standing quietly by and seeing me thus unhandsomely used? What am I to suppose by your permitting Tom, Dick, and Harry to strip me of my coffins, and my clothes, in this wretchedly cold climate? In what light (to come to the point) am I to regard your aiding and abetting that miserable little villain, Doctor Ponnonner, in pulling me by the nose?"

It will be taken for granted, no doubt that upon hearing this speech under the circumstances, we all either made for the door, or fell into violent hysterics, or went off in a general swoon. One of these three things was, I say, to be expected. Indeed each and all of these lines of conduct might have been very plausibly pursued. And, upon my word, I am at a loss to know how or why it was that we pursued neither the one or the other. But, perhaps, the true reason is to be sought in the spirit of the age, which proceeds by the rule of contraries altogether, and is now usually admitted as the solution of everything in the way of paradox and impossibility. Or, perhaps, after all, it was only the mummy's exceedingly natural and matter-of-course air that divested his words of the terrible. However this may be, the facts are clear, and no member of our party betrayed any very particular trepidation, or seemed to consider that anything had gone very especially wrong.

For my part I was convinced it was all right, and merely stepped aside, out of the range of the Egyptian's fist. Doctor Ponnonner thrust his hands into his breeches' pockets, looked hard at the mummy, and grew excessively red in the face. Mr. Gliddon stroked his whiskers, and drew up the collar of his shirt. Mr. Buckingham hung down his head, and put his right

thumb into the left corner of his mouth.

The Egyptian regarded him with a severe countenance for some minutes, and at length. with a sneer, said:

"Why don't you speak, Mr. Buckingham? Did you hear what I asked you, or not? Do take your

thumb out of your mouth!"

Mr. Buckingham, hereupon, gave a slight start, took his right thumb out of the left corner of his mouth, and, by way of indemnification, inserted his left thumb in the right corner of the aperture above-mentioned.

Not being able to get an answer from Mr. B., the figure turned peevishly to Mr. Gliddon, and, in a peremptory tone, demanded, in general terms, what we all meant.

Mr. Gliddon replied at great length, in phonetics; and but for the deficiency of American printing-offices in hieroglyphical type, it would afford me much pleasure to record here, in the original, the whole of his

very excellent speech.

I may as well take this occasion to remark, that all the subsequent conversation in which the mummy took a part, was carried on in primitive Egyptian, through the medium (so far as concerned myself and other untravelled members of the company) - through the medium, I say, of Messieurs Gliddon and Buckingham, as interpreters. These gentlemen spoke the mothertongue of the mummy with inimitable fluency and grace; but I could not help observing that (owing, no doubt, to the introduction of images entirely modern, and, of course, entirely novel to the stranger) the two travellers were reduced, occasionally, to the employment of sensible forms for the purpose of conveying a particular meaning. Mr. Gliddon, at one period, for example, could not make the Egyptian comprehend the term "politics," until he sketched upon the wall, with a bit of charcoal, a little carbuncle-nosed gentleman, out at elbows, standing upon a stump, with his left leg drawn back, his right arm thrown forward, with his fist shut, the eyes rolled up toward heaven, and the mouth open at an angle of ninety degrees. Just in the same way, Mr. Buckingham failed to convey the absolutely modern idea, "whig," until (at Doctor Ponnonner's suggestion) he grew very pale in the face, and consented to take off his own.

It will be readily understood that Mr. Gliddon's discourse turned chiefly upon the vast benefits accruing to science from the unrolling and disembowelling of mummies; apologizing, upon this score, for any disturbance that might have been occasioned him, in particular, the individual mummy called Allamistakeo, and concluding with a mere hint, (for it could scarcely be considered more,) that, as these little matters were now explained,

it might be as well to proceed with the investigation intended. Here Doctor Ponnonner made ready his instruments.

In regard to the latter suggestion of the orator, it appears that Allamistakeo had certain scruples of conscience, the nature of which I did not distinctly learn; but he expressed himself satisfied with the apologies tendered, and, getting down from the table, shook hands with the company all round.

When this ceremony was at an end, we immediately busied ourselves in repairing the damages which our subject had sustained from the scalpel. We sewed up the wound in his temple, bandaged his foot, and applied a square inch of black plaster to the tip of his nose.

It was now observed that the count, (this was the title, it seems, of Allamistakeo,) had a slight fit of shivering-no doubt from the cold. The doctor immediately repaired to his wardrobe, and soon returned with a black dress-coat, made in Jennings' best manner, a pair of sky-blue plaid pantaloons with straps, a pink gingham chemise, a flapped vest of brocade, a white sack overcoat, a walking cane with a hook, a hat with no brim, patent leather boots, straw-coloured kid gloves, an eye-glass, a pair of whiskers, and a waterfall cravat. Owing to the disparity of size between the count and the doctor, (the proportion being as two to one,) there was some little difficulty in adjusting these habiliments upon the person of the Egyptian; but when all was arranged, he might have been said to be dressed. Mr. Gliddon, therefore, gave him his arm, and led him to a comfortable chair by the fire, while the doctor rang the bell upon the spot, and ordered a supply of cigars and

The conversation soon grew animated. Much curiosity was, of course, expressed in regard to the somewhat remarkable fact of Allamistakeo's still remaining alive.

"I should have thought," observed Mr. Buckingham, "that it is high time you were dead." "Why," replied the count, very much astonished, "I am little more than seven hundred years old! My father lived a thousand, and was by no means in his

dotage when he died."

Here ensued a brisk series of questions and computations, by means of which it became evident that the antiquity of the mummy had been grossly misjudged. It had been five thousand and fifty years, and some months, since he had been consigned to the catacombs at Eleithias.

"But my remark," resumed Mr. Buckingham, "had no reference to your age at the period of interment; (I am willing to grant, in fact, that you are still a young man,) and my allusion was to the immensity of time, during which, by your own showing, you must have been done up in asphaltum."

"In what!" said the count.

"In asphaltum," persisted Mr. B.

"Ah, yes; I have some faint notion of what you mean: it might be made to answer, no doubt; but in my time we employed scarcely anything else than the bi-chloride of mercury."

"But what we are especially at a loss to understand," said Doctor Ponnonner, "is, how it happens that, having been dead and buried in Egypt, five thousand years ago, you are here to-day all alive, and looking

so delightfully well."

"Had I been, as you say, dead," replied the count, "it is more than probable that dead I should still be; for I perceive you are yet in the infancy of galvanism, and connot accomplish with it what was a common thing among us in the old days. But the fact is, I fell into catalepsy, and it was considered by my best friends that I was either dead, or should be; they accordingly embalmed me at once. I presume you are aware of the chief principle of the embalming process?"

"Why, not altogether."

"Ah, I perceive; -a deplorable condition of igno-

rance! Well, I cannot enter into details just now; but it is necessary to explain that to embalm, (properly speaking,) in Egypt, was to arrest indefinitely all the animal functions subjected to the process. I use the word 'animal' in its widest sense, as including the physical not more than the moral and vital being. I repeat that the leading principle of embalment consisted, with us, in the immediately arresting, and holding in perpetual abeyance, all the animal functions subjected to the process. To be brief, in whatever condition the individual was, at the period of embalment, in that condition he remained. Now, as it is my good fortune to be of the blood of the scarabæus, I was embalmed alive, as you see me at present."

"The blood of the scarabæus," exclaimed Doctor

Ponnonner.

"Yes. The scarabæus was the insignium, or the 'arms,' of a very distinguished and very rare patrician family. To be 'of the blood of the scarabæus,' is merely to be one of that family of which the scaraæbus is the insignium. I speak figuratively."

"But what has this to do with your being alive?"

"Why, it is the general custom in Egypt, to deprive a corpse, before embalment, of its bowels and brains: the race of scarabæi alone did not coincide with the custom. Had I not been a scarabæus, therefore, I should have been without bowels and brains; and without either it is inconvenient to live."

"I perceive that," said Mr. Buckingham; "and I presume that all the entire mummies that come to hand

are of the race of scarabæi."

" Beyond doubt."

"I thought," said Mr. Gliddon, very meekly, "that the scarabæus was one of the Egyptian gods."
"One of the Egyptian what!" exclaimed the mum-

my, starting to its feet.

"Gods!" repeated the traveller.

"Mr Gliddon, I really am astonished to hear you

talk in this style," said the count, resuming his chair. " No nation upon the face of the earth has ever acknowledged more than one god. The scarabæus, the ibis, &c., were with us, (as similar creatures have been with others) the symbols, or media, through which we offered worship to the Creator, too august to be more directly approached."

There was here a pause. At length the colloquy

was renewed by Dr. Ponnoner.
"It is not improbable, then, from what you have explained," said he, "that among the catacombs near the Nile, there may exist other mummies of the scara-

bæus tribe, in a condition of vitality."

"There can be no question of it," replied the count; "all the scarabæi embalmed accidentally while alive, are alive. Even some of those purposely so embalmed, may have been overlooked by their executors, and still remain in the tombs."

"Will you be kind enough to explain," I said,

"what you mean by 'purposely so embalmed?"

"With great pleasure," answered the mummy, after surveying me leisurely through his eye-glass-for it was the first time I had ventured to address him a direct

question.

"With great pleasure," he said. "The usual duration of man's life, in my time, was about eight hundred years. Few men died, unless by most extraordinary accident, before the age of six hundred; few lived longer than a decade of centuries; but eight were considered the natural term. After the discovery of the embalming principle, as I have already described it to you, it occurred to our philosophers that a laudable curiosity might be gratified, and, at the same time, the interests of science much advanced, by living this natural term in instalments. In the case of history, indeed, experience demonstrated that something of this kind was indispensable. An historian, for example, having attained the age of five hundred, would write a

book with great labour and then get himself carefully embalmed; leaving instruction to his executors pro tem, that they should cause him to be revivified after the lapse of a certain period—say five or six hundred years. Resuming existence at the expiration of this time, he would invariably find his great work converted into a species of hap-hazard note-book—that is to say, into a kind of literary arena for the conflicting guesses, riddles, and personal squabbles of whole herds of exasperated commentators. These guesses, &c., which passed under the name of annotations or emendations, were found so completely to have enveloped, distorted, and over-whelmed the text, that the author had to go about with a lantern to discover his own book. When discovered, it was never worth the trouble of the search. After re-writing it throughout, it was regarded as the bounden duty of the historian to set himself to work, immediately, in correcting from his own private knowledge and experience, the traditions of the day concerning the epoch at which he had originally lived. Now this process of re-scription and personal rectification, pursued by various intervals by various individual sages, from time to time, had the effect of preventing our history

from degenerating into absolute fable."

"I beg your pardon," said Doctor Ponnonner at this point, laying his hand gently upon the arm of the Egyptian—"I beg your pardon, sir; but may I pre-

sume to interrupt you for one moment?"

"By all means, sir," replied the count, drawing up.
"I merely wished to ask you a question," said the doctor. "You mentioned the historian's personal correction of traditions respecting his own epoch. Pray, sir, upon an average, what proportion of these Kabbala were usually found to be right?"

"The Kabbala, as you properly term them, sir, were generally discovered to be precisely on a par with the facts recorded in the un-re-written histories themselves." -that is to say, not one individual iota of either, wa.

ever known, under any circuastances, to be not totally

and radically wrong."

"But since it is quite clear," resumed the doctor, "that at least five thousand years have elapsed since your entombment, I take it for granted that your histories at that period, if not your traditions, were sufficiently explicit on that one topic of universal interest, the Creation, which took place, as I presume you are aware, only about ten centuries before."

"Sir!" said the Count Allamistakeo.

The doctor repeated his remarks; but it was only after much additional explanation, that the foreigner could be made to comprehend them. The latter at

length said, hesitatingly:

"The ideas you have suggested are to me, I confess, utterly novel. During my time I never knew any one to entertain so singular a fancy as that the universe (or this world, if you will have it so,) ever had a beginning at all. I remember once, and once only, hearing something remotely hinted, by a man of many speculations, concerning the origin of the human race; and by this individual, the very word Adam, (or Red Earth,) which you make use of, was employed. He employed it, however, in a generical sense, with reference to the spontaneous germination from rank soil—(just as a thousand of the lower genera of creatures are germinated)—the spontaneous germination, I say, of five vast hordes of men, simultaneously upspringing in five distinct and nearly equal divisions of the globe."

Here, in general, the company shrugged their shoulders, and one or two of us touched our foreheads with a very significant air. Mr. Silk Buckingham, first glancing slightly at the occiput, and then at the sinici-

put of Allamistakeo, spoke as follows:

"The long duration of human life in your time, together with the occasional practice of passing it, as you have explained, in instalments, must have had, indeed, a strong tendency to the general development and conglomeration of knowledge. I presume, therefore, that we are to attribute the marked inferiority of the old Egyptians in all particulars of science, when compared with the moderns, and more especially, with the Yankees, altogether to the superior solidity of the Egyptian skull."

"I confess again," replied the count, with much suavity, "that I am somewhat at a loss to comprehend you; pray, to what particulars of science do you allude?"

Here our whole party, joining voices, detailed, at great length, the assumptions of phrenology and the

marvels of animal magnetism.

Having heard us to an end, the count proceeded to relate a few anecdotes, which rendered it evident that prototypes of Gall and Spurzheim had flourished and faded in Egypt so long ago as to have been nearly forgotten, and that the manœuvres of Mesmer were really very contemptible tricks when put in collation with the positive miracles of the Theban savans, who created lice and a great many other similar things.

I here asked the count if his people were able to calculate eclipses. He smiled rather contemptuously,

and said they were.

This put me a little out; but I began to make other inquiries in regard to his astronomic al knowledge, when a member of the company, who had never as yet opened his mouth, whispered in my ear, that for information on this head, I had better consult Ptolemy, (whoev Ptolemy is,) as well as one Plutarch de facie lunæ.

I then questioned the mummy about burning-glass and lenses, and, in general, about the manufacture glass; but I had not made an end of my queries before the silent member again touched me quietly on the elbow, and begged me, for God's sake, to take a peep at Diodorus Siculus. As for the count, he merely asked me, in the way of reply, if we moderns possessed any such microscopes as would enable us to cut cameos

in the style of the Egyptians. While I was thinking how I should answer this question, little Doctor Ponnonner committed himself in a very extraordinary way.

"Look at our architecture!" he exclaimed, greatly to the indignation of both the travellers, who pinched

him black and blue to no purpose.

"Look," he cried with enthusiasm, "at the Bowling-green Fountain in New York! or if this be too vast a contemplation, regard for a moment the Capitol at Washington, D.C.!"—and the good little medical man went on to detail, very minutely, the proportions of the fabric to which he referred. He explained that the portico alone was adorned with no less than four-and-twenty

columns, five feet in diameter, and ten feet apart.

The count said that he regretted not being able to remember, just at that moment, the precise dimensions of any one of the principal buildings of the city of Aznac, whose foundations were laid in the night of Time, but the ruins of which were still standing, at the epoch of his entombment, in a vast plain of sand to the westward of Thebes. He recollected, however, (talking of porticoes,) that one affixed to an inferior palace in a kind of suburb called Carnac, consisted of a hundred and forty-four columns, thirty-seven feet each in circumference, and twenty-five feet apart. The approach of this portico, from the Nile, was through an avenue two miles long, composed of sphinxes, statues, and obelisks, twenty, sixty, and a hundred feet in height. The palace itself (as well as he could remember) was, in one direction, two miles long, and might have been altogether, about seven in circuit. Its walls were richly painted all over, within and without, with hieroglyphics. He would not pretend to assert that even fifty or sixty of the doctor's capitols might have been built within these walls, but he was by no means sure that two or three hundred of them might not have been squeezed in with some trouble. That palace at Carnac was an insignificant little building, after all. He

(the count) however, could not conscientiously refuse to admit the ingenuity, magnificence, and superiority of the Fountain at the Bowling-green as described by the doctor. Nothing like it, he was forced to allow, had ever been seen in Egypt or elsewhere.

I here asked the count what he had to say to our

railroads.

"Nothing," he replied, "in particular." They were rather slight, rather ill-conceived, and clumsily put together. They could not be compared, of course, with the vast, level, direct, iron-grooved causeways, upon which the Egyptians conveyed entire temples and solid obelisks of a hundred and fifty feet in altitude.

I spoke of our gigantic mechanical forces.

He agreed that we knew something in that way, but inquired how I should have gone to work in getting up the imposts on the lintels of even the little palace at Carnac.

This question I concluded not to hear, and demanded if he had any idea of Artesian wells; but he simply raised his eyebrows; while Mr. Gliddon winked at me very hard and said, in a low tone, that one had been recently discovered by the engineers employed to bore for water in the great Oasis.

I then mentioned our steel; but the foreigner elevated his nose, and asked me if our steel could have executed the sharp carved work seen on the obelisks, and which was wrought altogether by edge-tools of

copper.

This disconcerted us so greatly, that we thought it advisable to vary the attack to Metaphysics. We sent for a copy of a book called the "Dial," and read out of it a chapter or two about something which is not very clear, but which the Bostonians call the Great Movement, or Progress.

The count merely said that great movements were awfully common things in his day, and as for progress, it was at one time quite a nuisance, but it never progressed.

We then spoke of the great beauty and importance of Democracy, and were at much trouble in impressing the count with a due sense of the advantages we enjoyed in living where there was suffrage ad libitum, and

no king.

He listened with marked interest, and in fact seemed not a little amused. When we had done, he said that, a great while ago, there had occurred something of a very similar sort. Thirteen Egyptian provinces determined all at once to be free, and so set a magnificent example to the rest of mankind. They assembled their wise men, and concocted the most ingenious constitution it is possible to conceive. For a while they managed remarkably well; only their habit of bragging was prodigious. The thing ended, however, in the consolidation of the thirteen states, with some fifteen or twenty others, in the most odious and insupportable despotism that ever was heard of upon the face of the earth.

I asked what was the name of the usurping tyrant. As well as the count could recollect, it was Mob.

Not knowing what to say to this, I raised my voice, and deplored the Egyptian ignorance of steam.

The count looked at me with much astonishment, but made no answer. The silent gentleman, however, gave me a violent nudge in the ribs with his elbowstold me I had sufficiently exposed myself for onceand demanded if I was really such a fool as not to know that the modern steam-engine is derived from the invention of Hero, through Solomon de Caus.

We were now in imminent danger of being discomfited; but, as good luck would have it, Doctor Ponnonner, having rallied, returned to our rescue, and inquired if the people of Egypt would seriously pretend to rival the moderns in the all important particular of

dress.

The count, at this, glanced downwards to the straps of his pantaloons, and then taking hold of the end of one of his coat-tails, held it up close to his eyes for some minutes. Letting it fall, at last, his mouth extended itself very gradually from ear to ear; but I do not remember that he said anything in the way of

reply.

Hereupon we recovered our spirits, and the doctor, approaching the mummy with great dignity, desired it to say eandidly, upon its honour as a gentleman, if the Egyptians had comprehended, at any period, the manufacture of either Ponnonner's lozenges, or Brandreth's

pills.

We looked with profound anxiety, for an answer;—but in vain. It was not forthcoming. The Egyptian blushed and hung down his head. Never was triumph more consummate; never was defeat borne with so ill a grace. Indeed, I could not endure the spectacle of the poor mummy's mortification. I reached my hat,

bowed to him stiffly, and took leave.

Upon getting home I found it past four o'clock, and went immediately to-bed. It is now ten, A.M. I have been up since seven, penning these memoranda for the benefit of my family and of mankind. The former I shall behold no more. My wife is a shrew. The truth is, I am heartily sick of this life and of the nineteenth century in general. I am convinced that everything is going wrong. As soon, therefore, as I shave and swallow a cup of coffee, I shall just step over to Pornonner's and get embalmed for a couple of hundred years.



POEMS.

The Raven.

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,

Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,

As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber

door;

"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—

Only this and nothing more."

Ah! distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December, And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.

Eagerly I wished the morrow; vainly I had sought to borrow

From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—

Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain

Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;

So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating

"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber

Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door:

This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,

"Sir," said I, "or madam, truly your forgiveness I

implore;

But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,

I# .

And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,

That I scarce was sure I heard you "—here I opened wide the door;—

Darkness there, and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,

Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to

dream before;

But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,

And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore!"

This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"—

Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,

Soon again I heard a tapping something louder than before.

"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;

Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—

Let my heart be still a moment, and this mystery explore;—

'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of vore.

Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door-

Perched upon a bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door—

Perched and sat and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,

By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it

wore,

"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,

Ghastly, grim, and ancient Raven wandering from the nightly shore—

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the night's Platonian shore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,

Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore; For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being

Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—

Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,

With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust spoke only

That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.

Nothing farther then he uttered; not a feather then he fluttered—

Till I searcely more than muttered, "Other friends have flown before—

On the morrow he will leave me, as my hopes have flown before."

Then the bird said, "Never more."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken, "Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store,

Caught from some unhappy master, whom unmerciful

disaster

Followed fast and followed faster, till his songs one burden bore—

Till the dirges of his hope that melancholy burden bore, Of 'Never—never more.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,

Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and

bust and door;

Then upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—

What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous

bird of yore

Meant in croaking "Never more."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing

To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bo-

som's core:

This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining

On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light

gloated o'er,

But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er

She shall press, ah, never more! Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer

Swung by seraphim, whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

"Wretch!" I cried, "thy god hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee

Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!

Quaff, oh, quaff, this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Never more!"

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!

Whether tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,

Desolate, yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—

On this home by horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—

Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"

Quoth the Raven "Never more."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil-prophet still, if bird or devil!

By that heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden, whom the angels name Lenore—

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden, whom the angels name Lenore,"

Quoth the Raven, "Never more,"

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shricked, upstarting—

"Get thee back into the tempest and the night's Pluto-

nian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above

my door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"

Quoth the Raven, "Never more."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting,

On the pallid bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door;

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,

And the lamp-light o'er him streaming, throws his

shadow on the floor;

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor,

Shall be lifted—never more?

Tenore.

An, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown for ever! Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river;

And, Guy de Vere, hast thou no tear?—weep now or

never more!

See! on you drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenote Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song be sung!—

An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died co

young-

A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

"Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth, and hated her for her pride,

And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her-

that she died!

How shall the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how be sung

By you-by yours, the evil eye-by yours, the slan-

derous tongue

That did to death the innocence that died, and died so young?"

Peccarimus! but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no wrong! The sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with Hope, that flew beside,

Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have

been thy bride-

For her, the fair and debonnair, that now so lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair, but not within her eyes—
The life still there upon her hair—the death upon her
eyes.

"Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I upraise,

But waft the angel on her flight with a pæan of old days!

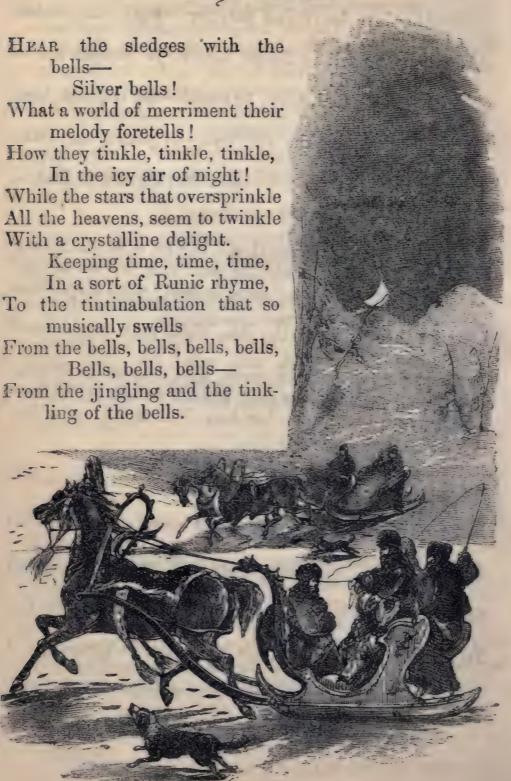
Let no bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed mirth.

Should catch the note, as it doth float up from the damned earth.

To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost is riven—

From hell unto a high estate far up within the heaven— From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King of Heaven."

The Bells.



Hear the mellow wedding bells, Golden bells!

What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight.
From the molten-golden notes.

And all in tune,

What a liquid ditty floats

To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!

Oh, from out the sounding cells, What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!

How it swells; How it dwells

On the Future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells,

Bells, bells, bells—

To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells:

Hear the loud alarum bells—Brazen bells!

What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!

In the startled ear of night

How they scream out their affright!

Too much horrified to speak,

They can only shriek, shriek,

Out of tune.

In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire, In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire

Leaping higher, higher, higher,

With a desperate desire, And a resolute endeavour Now—now to sit or never,

By the side of the pale-faced moon.

Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells

Of Despair!

How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air

Yet the ear it fully knows,

By the twanging, And the clanging,

How the danger ebbs and flows;

Yet the ear distinctly tells,

In the jangling, And the wrangling,

How the danger sinks and swells, By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells—

Of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells, bells, bells, bells, bells,

In the clamour and the clangour of the bells!

Hear the tolling of the bells— Iron bells!

What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!

In the silence of the night, How we shiver with affright

At the melancholy menace of their tone!

For every sound that floats

From the rust within their throats

Is a groan.

And the people—ah, the people— They that dwell up in the steeple,

All alone,

And who tolling, tolling, telling, In that muffled monotone,

Feel a glory in so rolling

On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—

They are Ghouls: And their king it is who tolls; And he rolls, rolls, rolls,

Rolls

A pæan from the bells! And his merry bosom swells With the pean of the bells! And he dances, and he yells; Keeping time, time, time, In a sort of Runic rhyme, To the pæan of the bells-

Of the bells:

Keeping time, time, time, In a sort of Runic rhyme, To the throbbing of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells— To the sobbing of the bells:

Keeping time, time, time,

As he knells, knells, knells, In a happy Runic rhyme,

To the rolling of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells— To the tolling of the bells— Of the bells, bells, bells—

Bells, bells, bells—

To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

Alalume.

THE skies they were ashen and sober: The leaves they were crisped and sere— The leaves they were withering and sere, It was night in the lonesome October Of my most immemorial year;

It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,

In the misty mid region of Weir—

It was down by the dank tarn of Auber, In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic, Of cypress, I roamed with my soul— Of cypress, with Pysche, my soul.

These were days when my heart was volcanic As the scoriac rivers that roll—

As the lavas that restlessly roll

Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole—

That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—
Our memories were treacherous and sere—

And we marked not the night of the year—

(Ah, night of all nights in the year!

We noted not the dim lake of Auber-

(Though once we had journeyed down here-

Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber, Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent, And star-dials pointed to morn— As the star-dials hinted of morn—

At the end of our path a liquescent And nebulous lustre was born.

Out of which a miraculous crescent

Arose with a duplicate horn-

Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with ts duplicate horn.

 She revels in a region of sighs:

She has seen that the tears are not dry on These cheeks, where the worm never dies,

And has come past the stars of the Lion To point us the path to the skies— To the Lethean peace of the skies—

Come up, in despite of the Lion,

To shine on us with her bright eyes-

Come up through the lair of the Lion, With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger, Said—" Sadly this star I mistrust— Her pallor I strangely mistrust:—

Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!

Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."

In terror she spoke, letting sink her

Wings until they trailed in the dust—-

In agony sobbed, letting sink her

Plumes till they trailed in the dust— Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming: Let us on by this tremulous light! Let us bathe in this crystalline light!

Its Sybilic splendour is beaming

With hope and in beauty to-night:

See !—it flickers up the sky through the night

Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming, And be sure it will lead us aright—

We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche, and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom—
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista.

But were stopped by the door of a tomb— By the door of a legended tomb;

And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
"T is the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober,
As the leaves that were crisped and sere—
As the leaves that were withering and sere

And I cried—"It was surely October
On this very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here—
That I brought a dead burden down here—
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?

Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber— This misty mid region of Weir—

Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber, This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

Annabel Tee.

It was many and many a year ago, In a kingdom by the sea,

That a maiden there lived, whom you may know By the name of Annabel Lee;

And this maiden she lived with no other thought Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child, In this kingdom by the sea:

But we loved with a love that was more than love— I and my Annabel Lee—

With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven Coveted her and me. And this was the reason that, long ago, In this kingdom by the sea,

A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling My beautiful Annabel Lee;

So that her high-born kinsman came,

And bore her away from me, To shut her up in a sepulchre

In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven, Went envying her and me—

Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know, In this kingdom by the sea)

That the wind came out of the cloud by night, Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love Of those who were older than we— Of many far wiser than we—

And neither the angels in heaven above, Nor the demons down under the sea,

Can ever dissever my soul from the soul Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:

And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride, In the sepulchre there by the sea

In the sepulchre there by the sea, In her tomb by the sounding sea.



Bridal Ballad.

The ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow:
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well;
But, when first he breathed his vow.
I felt my bosom swell—
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed his who fell
In the battle down the dell,
And who is happy now.

But he spoke to re-assure me,
And he kissed my pallid brow,
While a reverie came o'er me,
And to the church-yard bore me,
And I sighed to him before me,
Thinking him dead D'Elormie,
"Oh, I am happy now!"

And thus the words were spoken,
And this the plighted vow,
And, though my faith be broken,
And, though my heart be broken,
Behold the golden token
That proves me happy now!

Would God I could awaken!
For I dream I know not how;
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,—
Lest the dead who is forsaken
May not be happy now.

Che Baunted Palace.

In the greenest of our valleys, By good angels tenanted,

Once a fair and stately palace—

Radiant palace—reared its head. In the monarch Thought's dominion,

It stood there!

Never seraph spread a pinion Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden, On its roof did float and flow, (This—all this—was in the olden Time, long ago,)

And every gentle air that dallied, In that sweet day,

Along the ramparts plumed and pallia, A wingèd odour went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley, Through two luminous windows, saw

Spirits moving musically,

To a lute's well-tuned law,

Round about a throne where, sitting (Porphyrogene!

In state, his glory well befitting,

The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing Was the fair palace door,

Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing, And sparkling evermore,

A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty Was but to sing,

In voices of surpassing beauty,

The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate.

(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)

And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story

Is but a dim-remembered story Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,

Through the red-litten windows see—

Vast forms, that move fantastically,

To a discordant melody;

While, like a ghastly rapid river,

Through the pale door,

A hideeus throng such out for ever

A hideous throng rush out for ever, And laugh—but smile no more.

Culalie.

In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blush
bride—

I DWELT alone,

Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smil bride.

Ah, less—less bright
The stars of the night
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!
And never a flake
That the vapour can make
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,

Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded curl— Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most humble and careless curl.

Now doubt—now pain
Come never again,
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh;
And all day long
Shines, bright and strong

Astarté within the sky;

While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye-While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

For Annie.

THANK Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know,
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move.
As I lie at full length—
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly,
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning, The sighing and sobbing,

Are quieted now,

With that horrible throbbing

At heart:—ah, that horrible, Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures,

That torture the worst,

Has abated—the terrible

Torture of thirst,

For the napthaline river

Of Passion accurst:

I have drank of a water

That quenches all thirst:

Of a water that flows.

With a lullaby sound,

From a spring but a very few

Feet under ground—

From a cavern not very far

Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said—
That my room it is gloomy,
And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
In a different bed—
And, to sleep, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

The trivialest point, or you may lose your labour!
And yet there is in this no Gordion knot

Which one might not undo without a sabre,

If one could merely comprehend the plot. Enwritten upon the leaf where now are peering

Eyes scyntillating soul, there lie perdus

Three eloquent words oft uttered in the hearing

Of poets, by poets—as the name is a poet's too.

Its letters, although naturally lying

Like the knight Pinto—Mendez Ferdinando— Still form a synonym for Truth.—Cease trying!

You will not read the riddle, though you do the best you can do.

An Enigma.

"Seldom we find," says Solomon Don Dunce,
"Half an idea in the profoundest sonnet.

Through all the flimsy things we see at once As easily as through a Naples bonnet—

Trash of all trash!—how can a lady don it?
Yet heavier far than your Petrarchan stuff—
Owl-downy nonsense that the faintest puff

Twirls into trunk-paper the while you con it."

And veritably, Sol is right enough.

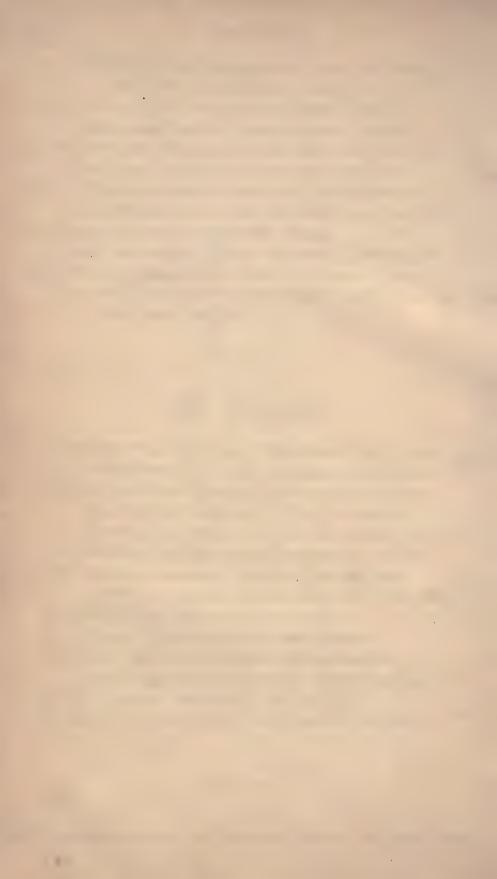
The general tuckermanities are arrant

Bubbles—ephemeral and so transparent—
But this is, now—you may depend upon it—
Stable, opaque, immortal—all by dint

Of the dear names that lie concealed within 't.

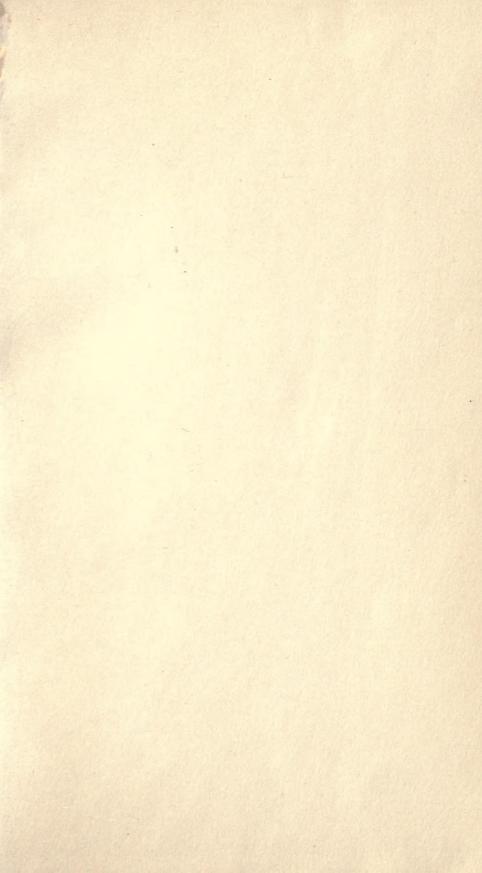
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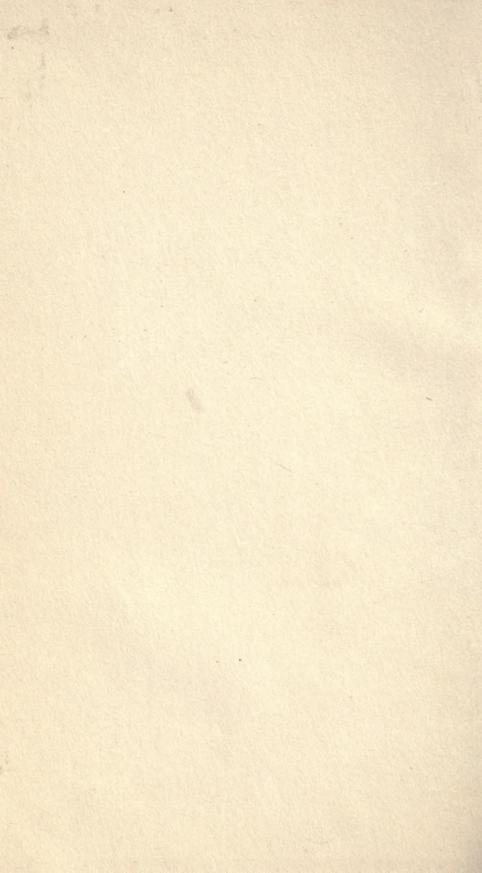


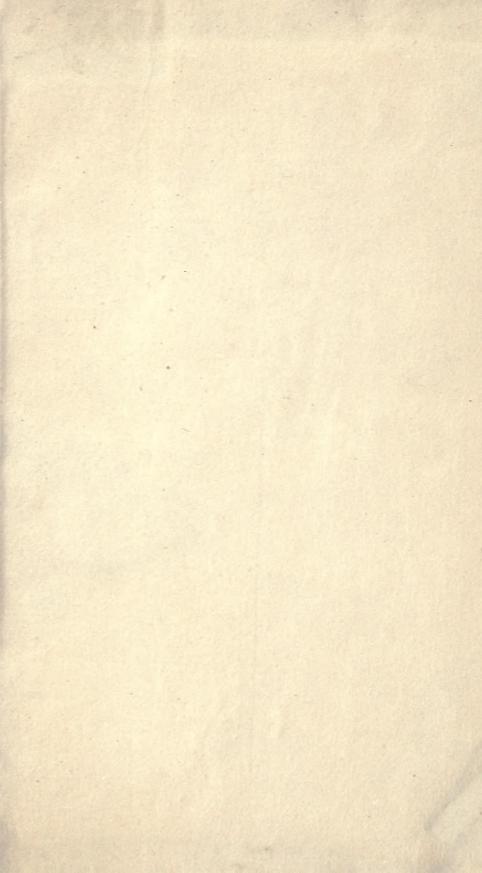












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